

THE ATHENÆUM

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No. 864.

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[JAMES HOLMES, TOOK'S COURT, CHANCERY LANE.]

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that the ANNUAL EXAMINATION for MATRICULATION in this UNIVERSITY will commence on MONDAY, the 1st of JULY. The Certificate of age must be transmitted to the Registrar fifteen days before the Examination begins.

Somerset House, By order of the Senate,

R. W. ROTHMAN, Registrar.

ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY.—

The ANNIVERSARY MEETING of this Society, for the ELECTION OF OFFICERS, &c., will be held at No. 3, WATERLOO PLACE, on MONDAY, the 27th instant, at half-past 1 P.M. The AGM will be followed by a Lecture on THE ANNIVERSARY DINNER delivered, at the same Sitting. The Members will DINE together at the New Hatchet House Tavern, St. James's-street, at Half-past Six precisely.—N.B.—No Meeting in the Street, at Half-past Six precisely.—J. R. JACKSON, Secretary.

ROYAL INSTITUTION OF GREAT

BRITAIN, ALBEMARLE-STREET, May 15, 1844.
The Managers hereby give NOTICE, that the FULLERIAN PROFESSORSHIP OF PHYSICS is now VACANT, and that the ELECTION to it will take place on MONDAY, the 1st of JUNE, next, at Four o'clock in the afternoon. Applications from Candidates are to be sent, addressed to the Secretary of the Royal Institution, at the house of the Institution, on or before Four o'clock p.m. of Saturday, the 29th of June.

J. BARLOW, M.A., Sec. R.I.

LONDON LIBRARY, 49, PALL-MALL.

PATRON, HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE ALBERT.—The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Members will take place on TUESDAY, the 2nd of JUNE, at the Right Honourable the Lord of CLARENDON, President, will take the Chair at Three o'clock precisely.—A Second Supplement to the Catalogue is published this day, price One Shilling. The Annual Subscription to the Library (Two Pounds) became due on the 1st instant. Subscribers who have not already paid it, are requested to do so as soon as possible.

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A Selection from the Speeches and Writings of the late Lord King. Edited by Earl Fortescue. Longman & Co.

Earl Fortescue has rendered good service both to economic and to moral science by this seasonable publication; and has at the same time paid just homage to the memory of a statesman who stood in advance of his age, and advocated sound principles, now all but universally recognized as important truths, at a time when "they were ridiculed as visionary, or denounced as dangerous, not only by overwhelming majorities of both branches of the legislature, but by the great bulk of all the higher and even the middle classes throughout the country." Trained in the principles of John Locke, of whom he was the personal representative, his ancestor Lord Chancellor King having been the nephew and ward of that illustrious philosopher, Lord King, from the very commencement of his career, was distinguished for bold originality of thought, earnest pursuit of truth, and a disregard, almost amounting to contempt, for all that is merely superficial and conventional. Economic science was regarded as something very suspicious by most of those who took a lead in public affairs some thirty years ago, perhaps on the principle that men set themselves against reason, so soon as they find that reason is decidedly against them; the "general principle" which his Lordship sets first in the notes he prepared for his own guidance, was one which the world long viewed with suspicion, but of which it has now practically discovered both the wisdom and the beneficence:—

"Every man best consults the public good by consulting his own individual advantage. By employing productive labourers, and bestowing his money for an equivalent, he encourages the industrious class: by neglecting his own interest, by profusion, or even indiscriminate charity, he encourages the idle class, and diminishes instead of increasing the sum total of the capital of the society. Illustration of this position by the instance of monopolisers, corn factors, &c., in a scarcity."

The hints designed to be acted upon in a Committee for the increase of Trade, are full of valuable truths, simply stated, and admirably illustrated. The following passage contains in a brief space the substance of some thousand speeches delivered since it was written:—

"As the exchange of the produce of the industry of the towns and that of the country is highly necessary and advantageous to both, so in a more extended sense it is most highly advantageous to exchange the produce of the industry of different countries, which have made very unequal advances in wealth and population. If the inhabitants of a town were to determine to grow their provisions within the narrow precincts surrounding their walls, applying the power of steam-engines to raise water for irrigation, and thus forcing nature, at an immense expense, to increase the produce of their immediate territory, every one would allow the folly of that attempt; but in the case here supposed, the absurdity is of the same kind, differing only in degree from that impolicy by which a nation determines to force the production of the raw material and food in its own soil. The more wealthy and populous, the greater the absurdity of the attempt; and as no power could possibly confine capital to the town which so abused its resources, so in its degree capital will tend to quit the nation which pursues the same impolitic course. The first is an extreme case. The absurdity of the second instance depends on the degree to which the mischief is felt by the whole community at large, exactly in proportion as such bad policy prevails. A populous and manufacturing nation naturally exchanges its wrought produce for the raw produce and food raised at a cheaper rate with far less expense of labour in less populous countries and on more fertile lands. The

manufactured goods are sent in return for commodities of another nature, and the payment for the manufactured produce can only be made by exchanging raw produce and food. As it is clearly the interest of the manufacturing nation to obtain its supply of raw produce at the cheapest rate, so it is equally clear that the attempts both to produce the raw material and food within itself and also to export its manufactured produce to the less populous countries, is an impossible attempt. It would suppose that the same nation could always sell and never buy. The protecting duties by which certain manufactures and certain descriptions of produce are unnaturally forced are universally prejudicial to the great general interests of the whole community. They are advantages given to the few at the expense of the many. The real interests of the great body of consumers is sacrificed to the gain of comparatively a few producers."

Recent discussions have given importance to Lord King's statesmanlike view of the currency; and though his observations specially refer to a state of things which no longer exists, yet in the discussion on the effects of the Bank Restriction Act, he evolves some principles of universal application. At the present moment the following passage is sure to arrest attention:—

"An unlimited paper currency cannot exist in any shape or under any circumstances with security or advantage to the public; but it is least in danger of being grossly abused when it is intrusted to some one experienced and responsible body. The establishment of independent banks in different parts of the empire has the necessary consequence of subjecting the value of the circulating medium to perpetual fluctuations in every district in which such banks are established. Under such a system the notes of the several banks, like the degraded coins of different countries, must vary in their relative values, and be depreciated in different proportions, according to the various degrees of prudence and moderation with which the power of issuing the notes is exercised."

We add another passage on the importance of having a single standard of value; his Lordship has adopted nearly the same line of argument as that recently taken by Sir Robert Peel:—

"One of the most important properties in a standard of currency is steadiness and uniformity of value. But there seems no reason to believe that the price of gold has fluctuated, or that its value has fallen, during the last century, more than that of silver, or that the latter metal has any advantage over gold in this respect. A more important reason for adhering to gold as the standard of value still remains to be considered. For near a century at least, all agreements have been entered into, and all debts have been contracted in England upon the supposition of payments being made in the present gold coin. To alter the denomination of this coin by adjusting its value to the obsolete, and at present imaginary, standard of silver, would be an injury to debtors, and an advantage to creditors, of about 4 per cent. in all future payments. Such a measure would have the effect of violating the faith of all existing contracts; and would be liable to many of the objections with which the present depreciation of money, produced by the Bank restriction, has been justly charged. It has been the usual fault of governments and the general tendency of legislative interference on these subjects to reduce the value of the current coin; but injustice may be committed in an equal, though opposite degree by raising the standard of currency; and for this reason no alteration ought ever to be made in the practical measure of value without very great and urgent necessity."

Lord King strenuously maintained that every legislative interference with industry was mischievous in itself, and still more evil in its consequences; it necessitated a series of successive interferences which only added difficulty to difficulty, until at last the original subject lies overwhelmed and buried under the incumbent mass and rubbish of superadded matter. The history of the woollen manufacture, on which Parliament long continued to bestow a very disproportionate amount of attention, clearly illustrates this truth; it narrowly escaped being

ruined by protection. On the other hand, the cotton manufacture, so long as it remained free from legislative intermeddling, advanced more rapidly to unexampled prosperity than any other branch of industry in the country. Lord King declared that Parliament had no right to intervene in any contract between the employer and the employed; but it would perhaps have been better to put the question of right aside, and merely inquire, if the principle of intervention be admitted, where is it to stop? Intervention has been sought to prevent some surplus or other, which always appeared the more dangerous the more it was indefinite:—

"One of the agreeable varieties was that a superabundant population was the cause of the distress; but this soon yielded to a superabundance of produce, and that to a superabundance of gold. For six years, however, the three principles he had mentioned had been more or less preached as gospel, and in some instances they had been swallowed with as much implicit faith as ministers could desire. Ministerial pamphlets and newspapers, and Ministerial scribblers and runners had long maintained that taxation was no evil, and caused no distress; and it was a position well suited for the knaves who profited by it, and for the fools who were ruined by it. Even parliamentary majorities had been found pliant enough to admit it, but after all came the real difficulty, and it was this, that government had extracted too much from the industrious and productive, to give it to the idle and unproductive. So large a portion of the gross produce of the land was taken from those who raised it, that a sufficient remuneration was not left behind. Perhaps the noble Earl (Stanhope) might contend that there was too much capital; and he could undoubtedly find it very easy to drive the capital out of the country. Such were the glorious absurdities of this new school of political economy. It might not be difficult to reduce the country even to a worse condition than at present; but even if the produce were diminished and the capital expelled, hereafter they might both be restored, and then the evils now complained of would be renewed. The great objection to taxation was, that it was a bar to all future improvement: it prevented capital from returning a fair profit, and industry from obtaining its reward. To be sure, the doctrine of to-day was one of exceeding comfort,—nothing need be done but to take away a great part of the produce, and all would be right: that was the scheme, the remedy, the unfailing resource of the minister of finance, who might well pride himself upon taking away what was not of the slightest utility. This was one of the delusions attempted to be practised upon public credulity. The noble Earl had next told the House that it must look to the effect of natural causes and to Providence. But who were they that gave this advice? The very men who for twenty years had been counteracting the effects of natural causes, and resisting the beneficial operations of Providence. Their excessive taxation had reduced this country to the condition of one with a bad climate and wretched soil; and yet they had the face to come to Parliament and say, 'Look to Nature and Providence for a remedy!' From Providence a remedy might come, but assuredly it would never come from ministers."

Without at all entering on the ground of political controversy, or passing any opinion on the conclusiveness of Lord King's arguments, we may give some specimens of his caustic humour and lively illustrations of a subject which one would think must have been long since exhausted. The following extract from a speech on the Corn Laws, is amusing even when it is not convincing:—

"Turning to history, he must remind their Lordships of the period when the corn laws were passed. That event took place in those dark ages of legislation, in those times of ignorance, when it was gravely declared that a one pound note was equal in value to a sovereign. Then it was, when our political sun was in obscurity, that a law was passed to make corn and bread dear. Tradition said, that after a very expensive war, the landlords objected to pay their share of the expense. They liked the war very well,

but they did not like to be called upon when the bill came to be settled. They then took counsel how to avoid paying their part of the bill. Two ways occurred to them of accomplishing that object. The first was by defrauding the public creditor; the second by taxing the consumers of corn. Now it happened, that to the first course the government objected; the public creditor was therefore saved, but the consumer of corn was sacrificed. It appeared that at this time a close alliance had been formed between the government, the landowners, and the clergy. The object of the government was high taxes, the object of the landowners high rents, and the object of the clergy high tithes. Now he believed, that with regard to rents and tithes, the landlords and the clergy were as obdurate as ever; but he was persuaded that the government would break the compact if they could. They would willingly abandon this mode of taxing for one which would work more easily and with better effect. But it was said, how is it possible to obtain high taxes without high prices? To this he would answer, that high taxes could be paid with much greater ease, if the high prices were got rid of; for the Corn Laws formed a grievous addition to the other burdens of the country, and if the public had not to pay so dear for corn, the weight of the other taxes would be more easily borne. This dead weight thrown on the first necessary of life, reminded him of an awkward method which had been resorted to in its production. A practice, it was said, once prevailed in Ireland, of fastening the plough to the horse's tail, and in that way making him drag it along. Perhaps the noble Earl opposite (Lord Limerick) would stand up in defence of that ancient and venerable practice; but he would advise the noble Earl to consider the difference between a field ploughed by the miserable Irish horse of antiquity, with the plough at his tail, and another ploughed by a well-harnessed and a well-fed horse, who could put his shoulder to the work. If he looked well to this point, he would find that the horse yoked as horses were elsewhere ploughed with great ease, six inches deep, while the jaded animal with the plough at his tail could barely scratch the ground. Now, it was precisely the same thing with the Corn Laws. Like the plough at the horse's tail they were a dead weight on the public, and damped the energies of the country. If their Lordships were really desirous that it should be enabled to support a great amount of taxation, they would lose no time in repealing those laws."

We shall not quote from any of Lord King's speeches on subjects immediately connected with party politics, but there seems to be a growing feeling, that all questions of scientific principle, whether belonging to Economics or Ethics, ought to be disengaged from party associations; and as the issue between what is called protection and what is called freedom of industry, is really as much a question of pure science as the area of a triangle or the properties of a sphere, we shall give Lord King's exposition of the Corn Laws, on moving an amendment to the address of November 1826, as a problem which our readers are to solve for themselves:—

"The existing laws, which prohibit the importation of foreign corn, except when the price of grain shall have arisen to an extravagant height in the home market, are found to be highly detrimental to the public prosperity; they cause an unnecessary waste of labour in the cultivation of poor lands, they enhance the cost of food, they diminish the profits of stock, they have a strong tendency to drive capital abroad, they are most injurious to trade by limiting the beneficial exchange of foreign raw produce with the manufactured produce of British industry, they encourage the establishment of rival manufactures in foreign countries, and, lastly, they are unjust, inasmuch as they prevent the people from obtaining a supply of the first necessary of life at the cheapest market."

In closing this volume we have to regret, what we too rarely have to make the subject of complaint, the brevity of the editor. Earl Fortescue has not only shown that he can appreciate Lord King, but that he is well able to maintain the principles and enforce the doctrines to which his illustrious relative devoted his life.

Coningsby; or the New Generation. By B. Disraeli, Esq. 3 vols. Colburn. THOUGH it is now several summers since we had a novel from the hand of Mr. Disraeli, so many pleasant associations are connected with his first work, that we opened the present with more than usual expectation. As, however, we hurried on, and turned page after page, sundry "wise saws," forgotten in the first moment of impatience, presented themselves to consideration. There is a literary maturity, which means the ripeness of strength; powers balanced, passions rebuked, extravagance trained into beauty; but there is also a literary middle age, which means high spirits evaporated, sympathies and antipathies alike weakened,—the wisdom of words in place of the impulses of the heart. What the fruits of the former are, let a score of the world's great authors proclaim in their works; what are the offspring of the latter may be seen, we think, in the novel before us: which was read without an objection, and closed without a regret.

Perhaps the first question asked of the witness in the critic's chair will be suggested by the title—is the novel political and personal? and if so, to which class among the many varieties of the 'New Generation' is it devoted? or is the title one of those traps which publishers set to catch the unwary and simple-minded? The novel is both personal and political—in 'Coningsby,' as heretofore in 'Henrietta Temple' and 'Venetia.' Mr. Disraeli deals with actual persons and events. The story belongs to our times—is thickly set with shrewd incidental glimpses of parties and questions, taken by an eye audacious, perhaps, rather than keen-sighted; and the reader who loves to trace the current of the wind by the straw, and has a turn for comparison and parallel-making, might do worse than read 'Coningsby,' after Sir E. B. Lytton's 'Godolphin,' as two slight pieces of political philosophy in fiction, with the difference of ten years between them.

It is not easy to give an account of the story before us, in a small compass, though a more trite one has not often been concocted. The hero is the grandson of a rich and powerful nobleman, to whom his son's marriage is distasteful, and who has uncontrolled power over all his vast possessions. Hence, when the boy is left an orphan, Lord Monmouth sends him to Eton, notices him at rare intervals, and capriciously—and, finally, on finding that he has attached himself to the one person in the world whom he desired that he should avoid, disinherits him in a will which in spirit is duplicate to one registered in Lady Blessington's 'Meredith,' both referable to the same original. A dark shadow, however, is placed next to the Sybaritic peer in Mr. Disraeli's novel, and to this we must advert, as the portrait is one of the best pieces of draughtsmanship in the work:—

"Mr. Rigby was a member for one of Lord Monmouth's boroughs. He was the manager of Lord Monmouth's parliamentary influence, and the auditor of his vast estates. He was more; he was Lord Monmouth's companion when in England, his correspondent when abroad—hardly his counsellor, for Lord Monmouth never required advice; but Mr. Rigby could instruct him in matters of detail, which Mr. Rigby made amusing. Rigby was not a professional man; indeed, his origin, education, early pursuits, and studies, were equally obscure; but he had contrived in good time to squeeze himself into Parliament, by means which no one could ever comprehend, and then set up to be a perfect man of business. The world took him at his word, for he was bold, acute, and voluble; with no thought, but a good deal of desultory information; and though destitute of all imagination and noble sentiment, was blessed with a vigorous, mendacious fancy, fruitful in small expedients, and never happier than when devi-

ing shifts for great men's scrapes. They say that all of us have one chance in this life, and so it was with Rigby. After a struggle of many years, after a long series of the usual alternatives of small successes and small failures, after a few cleverish speeches and a good many cleverish pamphlets, with a considerable reputation indeed for *pasquinades*, most of which he never wrote, and articles in reviews to which it was whispered he had contributed, Rigby, who had already intrigued himself into a subordinate office, met with Lord Monmouth. He was just the animal that Lord Monmouth wanted, for Lord Monmouth always looked upon human nature with the callous eye of a jockey. He surveyed Rigby, and he determined to buy him. He bought him; with his clear head, his indefatigable industry, his audacious tongue, and his ready and unscrupulous pen; with all his dates, all his lampoons; all his private memoirs, and all his political intrigues. It was a good purchase. Rigby became a great personage, and Lord Monmouth's man." * * Mr. Rigby had a classical retreat, not distant from this establishment, which he esteemed a *Tusculum*. There, surrounded by his busts and books, he wrote his lampoons and articles; massacred a she liberal, (it was thought that no one could lash a woman like Rigby) cut up a rising genius whose politics were different from his own, or sacrificed some unhappy wretch who had brought his claims before Parliament, proving by garbled extracts from official correspondence that no one could refer to, that the malcontent, instead of being a victim, was on the contrary a defaulter. Tadpole and Taper would back Rigby for 'slashing reply' against the field. Here too at the end of a busy week, he found it occasionally convenient to entertain a clever friend or two of equivocal reputation, with whom he had become acquainted in former days of equal brotherhood. No one was more faithful to his early friends than Mr. Rigby; particularly if they could write a squib."

We must add some finishing touches, given with sincerity of bitterness which there is no mistaking:—

"Mr. Rigby had been shut up much at his villa of late. He was concocting, you could not term it composing, a 'very slashing article,' which was to prove that the penny postage must be the destruction of the Aristocracy. It was a grand subject treated in his highest style. His parallel portraits of Rowland Hill, the Conqueror of Almarez, and Rowland Hill the deviser of the cheap postage, was enormously fine. It was full of passages in italics; little words in great capitals; and almost drew tears. The statistical details also were highly interesting and novel. Several of the old postmen, both twopenny and general, who had been in office with himself, and who were inspired with an equal zeal against that spirit of Reform of which they had alike been victims, supplied him with information which nothing but a breach of ministerial duty could have furnished. The prophetic peroration as to the irresistible progress of Democracy was almost as powerful as one of Rigby's speeches on Aldborough or Amersham. There never was a fellow for giving a good hearty kick to the people like Rigby. Himself sprung from the dregs of the populace, this was disinterested. What could be more patriotic and magnanimous than his Jeremiads over the fall of the Montmorencis and the Crillon, or the possible catastrophe of the Perrys and the Manners! The truth of all this hullabaloo was that Rigby had a sly pension, which by an inevitable association of ideas, he always connected with the maintenance of an Aristocracy. All his ramarole dissertations on the French Revolution were impelled by this secret influence; and when he wailed over 'la guerre aux châteaux,' and moaned like a man-drake over Nottingham Castle in flames, the rogue had an eye all the while to Quarter Day!"

Were we to stop short at this extract, our readers might suppose that the novel was merely a collection of personalities and pencilings. But 'Coningsby' has scenes of sentiment, and intrigue, and festivity; and one of them possesses such a pertinence at the present moment that we cannot do better than give it:—

"About a fortnight after it was Montem. One need hardly remind the reader that this celebrated ceremony, of which the origin is lost in obscurity, and

which now occurs triennially, is the tenure by which Eton College holds some of its domains; the waving of a flag by one of the scholars on a mount near the village of Salt Hill, and to which without doubt it gives the name, since on this day every visitor to Eton, and every traveller in its vicinity, from the monarch to the peasant, are stopped on the road by youthful brigands in picturesque costume, and summoned to contribute 'salt' in the shape of coin of the realm, to the purse collecting for the Captain of Eton, the senior scholar on the Foundation, who is about to repair to King's College, Cambridge. On this day the Captain of Eton appears in a dress as martial as his title: indeed, each sixth form boy represents in his uniform, though not perhaps according to the exact rules of the Horse Guards, an officer of the army. One is a marshal, another an ensign. There is a lieutenant, too; and the remainder are sergeants. Each of those who are intrusted with these ephemeral commissions, has one or more attendants: the number of these varying according to his rank. These Servitors are selected, according to the wishes of the several members of the sixth form, out of the ranks of the lower boys, that is, those boys who are below the fifth form; and all these attendants are arrayed in a variety of fancy dresses. The senior Oppidan and the senior Colleger next to the Captains of those two divisions of the school, figure also in fancy costume, and are called 'Saltbearers.' It is their business, together with the twelve senior Collegers of the fifth form, who are called 'Runners,' and whose costume is also determined by the taste of the wearers, to levy the contributions. And all the Oppidans of the fifth form, among whom ranked Coningsby, class as 'Corporals,' and are severally followed by one or more lower boys, who are denominated 'Polemen,' but who appear in their ordinary dress. It was a fine bright morning; the bells of Eton and Windsor rang merrily; everybody was astir, and every moment some gay equipage drove into the town. Gaily clustering in the thronged precincts of the College might be observed many a glistening form; airy Greek, or sumptuous Ottoman, heroes of the Holy Sepulchre, Spanish Hidalgos who had fought at Pavia, Highland Chiefs who had charged at Culloden, gay in the tartan of Prince Charlie. The Long Walk was full of gay groups in scarlet coats, or fanciful uniforms; some in earnest conversation, some criticising the arriving guests; others encircling some magnificent hero, who astounded them with his slashed doublet or flowing plume. A knot of boys, sitting on the Long Walk wall, with their feet swinging in the air, watched the arriving guests of the Provost. 'I say, Townshend,' said one, 'there's Grobleton; he was a bully. I wonder if that's his wife. Who's this? The Duke of Agincourt. He wasn't an Eton fellow? Yes, he was. He was called Poictiers then. Oh! ah! his name is in the upper school, very large, under Charles Fox. I say, Townshend, did you see Saville's turban? What was it made of? He says his mother brought it from Grand Cairo. Didn't he just look like the Saracen's Head! Here are some Dons. That's Hallam! We'll give him a cheer. I say, Townshend, look at this fellow. He does not think small beer of himself. I wonder who he is! The Duke of Wellington's valet, come to say his master is engaged. Oh! by Jove he heard you. I wonder if the Duke will come. Won't we give him a cheer!'—'By Jove, who is this?' exclaimed Townshend, and he jumped from the wall, and followed by his companions, rushed towards the road. Two brittas, each drawn by four grey horses of mettle, and each accompanied by outriders as well mounted, were advancing at a rapid pace along the road that leads from Slough to the College. But they were destined to an irresistible check. About fifty yards before they had reached the gate that leads into Weston's yard, a ruthless but splendid Albanian, in crimson and gold embroidered jacket, and snowy camese, started forward, and holding out his silver-sheathed yataghan commanded the postillion to stop. A Peruvian Inca on the other side of the road gave a simultaneous command, and would infallibly have transfixed the outriders with an arrow from his unerring bow, had they for an instant hesitated. The Albanian Chief then advanced to the door of the carriage, which he opened, and in a tone of great courtesy, announced that he was under the necessity

of troubling its inmates for 'salt.' There was no delay. The Lord of the equipage, with the amiable condescension of a 'grand monarque,' expressed his hope that the collection would be an ample one, and as an old Etonian, placed in the hands of the Albanian his contribution, a magnificent purse furnished for the occasion, and heavy with gold. 'Don't be alarmed, ladies,' said a very handsome young officer, laughing, and taking off his cocked hat. 'Ah!' exclaimed one of the ladies, turning at the voice, and starting a little. 'Ah; it is Mr. Coningsby.' Lord Eskdale paid the salt for the next carriage. 'Do they come down pretty stiff?' he inquired, and then pulling forth a roll of bank-notes from the pocket of his pea-jacket, he wished them good morning."

By the above passages it will be seen that Mr. Disraeli's manner as a narrator has changed: most will assert, for better. He has wisely retrenched his allowance of filagree—laid by his episodes and ejaculations—eschewed epithets with a Quaker-like precision—and set his sentences wisely in order. For all this he will have the respect of the scholar and of the critic who goes by Dr. Dilworth's rule of thumb. 'We, however, cannot but remember Moore's

'Give me back the wild freshness of morning!' though we know that 'Vivian Grey' was very mad, and "the Wondrous Tale of Alroy" amazing enough to set a "Katterfelto's hair on end." Let us have Nature above everything else; since on those to whom exuberance is natural, the proprieties sit with an effect at once painful and frigid!

Seventh Annual Report of the Massachusetts Board of Education; together with the Seventh Annual Report of the Secretary of the Board. By Horace Mann, Esq. Boston, Jan. 1844.

The last of these documents is one of the most interesting reports on educational subjects we have ever happened to meet with. Mr. Horace Mann, its author, is a School critic of much experience, sagacity, and practical quickness in detail. He is besides evidently a benevolent man, looking seriously, and yet not with despondency, on our social state; a lover of his own country, an admirer of her institutions, but touched with a consciousness of her present short-comings. After six years devotion to the duties of his office, as Secretary to the Massachusetts Board of Education, his health being injured by exertion, he requested leave to make such a tour (at his own expense) as might serve the double purpose of bodily renovation and of bringing in valuable information respecting his favourite objects—and accordingly employed six months of 1843, in a rapid survey of English, Irish, Scotch, Prussian, German, Dutch and French Schools. The time, no doubt, was much too short for the purposes of careful individual inspection, and the pamphlet is not without an occasional appearance of haste: yet it serves a useful purpose. Men accustomed, like Mr. Mann, to look much at children and teachers, acquire great quickness in estimating the general position of these relative parties; and those less experienced are, more apparently than really, wise, when they speak with contempt of their criticism. It is always good for something—and teachers should be willing to accept the aid it might give them, in forming an estimate of the principal deficiencies, as well as merits, of their rule. The worst part of the business is, that these clever and energetic men, who bustle through a great deal of work in a short time, do not, in general, allow enough for what, in a short survey, they cannot see. We may grant, for instance, the facts of the promptitude, spirit, and energy displayed in the Scotch schools, and yet doubt exceedingly whether the individual attainments of boys kept in this state of violent excitement, are at all equal to those of many

pupils in quieter and duller looking schools. There seems to us no necessity for the sleepy method of hearing each scholar answer his question *in turn*, merely because there is no taking places—let the teacher put his question as irregularly and unexpectedly as he pleases, only let a distinct answer be required from the scholar signified; or if he cannot answer, let him proceed to another. The secret is, vigour and promptitude, without violence.

Respecting the agonistic wrestlings of Scotch scholars, however, let Mr. Mann speak for himself:

"I entirely despair," he says, "of exciting in any other person, by a description, the vivid impressions of mental activity or celerity which the daily operations of these schools (the Scotch) produced on my mind—actual observation can alone give anything approaching to the true idea. I do not exaggerate when I say, that the most active and lively schools I have ever seen in the United States, must be regarded almost as dormitories, if compared with the fervid life of the Scotch schools: and, by the side of theirs, our pupils would seem to be hibernating animals just emerging from their torpid state, and as yet but half-conscious of the possession of life and faculties. It is certainly within bounds to say, that there were five times as many questions put, and answers given, in the same space of time, as I ever heard put or given in any school in our own country. But few preliminary observations are necessary to make any description of a Scotch school intelligible. In the numerous Scotch schools, which I saw, the custom of place-taking prevailed, not merely in spelling, but in geography, arithmetic, reading, defining, &c. Nor did this consist solely in the passing up of the one giving a right answer, above the one giving a wrong; but, if a scholar made a very bright answer, he was promoted at once to the top of the class—if he made a very stupid one, he was sentenced no less summarily to the bottom. Periodically, prizes are given, and the fact of having been 'Dux' (that is, at the head of the class) the greatest number of times is the principal ground on which the prizes are awarded. In some schools, an auxiliary stimulus is applied. The fact of having passed up so many places (say ten or twelve) entitles the pupil to a ticket; and a given number of these tickets is equivalent to being 'dux' once. When this sharper goad to emulation is to be applied, the spectator will see the teacher fill his hand with small bits of pasteboard, and, as the recitation goes on, and competition grows keen, and places are rapidly lost and won, the teacher is seen occasionally to give one of these tickets to a pupil as a counter, or token, that he has passed up above so many of his fellows, that is, he may have passed up above four at one time, six at another, two at another—and if twelve is the number which entitles to a ticket, one will be given without any stopping or speaking—for the teacher and pupil appear to have kept a silent reckoning, and when the latter extends his hand, the former gives a ticket without any suspension of the lesson. This gives the greatest intensity to competition, and, at such times, the children have a look of almost maniacal eagerness and anxiety."

Again:—

"A boy errs, giving, perhaps, a wrong gender, or saying that the word is derived from a Greek verb, when, in fact, it is derived from a Greek noun of the same family. Twenty boys leap forward into the area—as though the house were on fire, or a mine, or ambush, had been sprung upon them—and shout out the true answer, in a voice that could be heard forty rods. And so the recitation proceeds for an hour. To an unaccustomed spectator, on entering one of these rooms, all seems uproar, turbulence, and the contention of angry voices; the teacher traversing the space before his class in a state of high excitement, the pupils springing from their seats, darting to the middle of the floor, and sometimes, with extended arms, forming a circle around him, two, three, or four deep—every finger quivering from the intensity of their motions, until some more sagacious mind, outstripping its rivals, solves the difficulty—when all are in their seats again, as though by magic, and ready for another encounter of wits. I have seen a school kept for two hours in succession in this state of intense

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mental activity, with nothing more than an alteration of subjects during the time, or, perhaps, the relaxation of singing. At the end of the recitation, both teacher and pupils would glow with heat, and be covered with perspiration, as though they had been contending in the race or the ring. It would be utterly impossible for the children to bear such fiery excitement if the physical exercise were not as violent as the mental is intense. But children who actually leap into the air from the energy of their impulses, and repeat this as often as once in two minutes, on an average, will not suffer from suppressed activity of the muscular system."

As Mr. Mann makes no remark on the hazards of this violent competitive exercise, it is to be supposed he has no decided opinion against it. To ourselves it appears, morally, mentally, and physically, bad. The sort of "physical exercise" here spoken of, seems to us no more likely to benefit the body than the convulsive movements of a child suffering under St. Vitus's dance. As to the proof it brings of the love of knowledge, also, to what does it amount? The whole thing is reduced to a system of prize-fighting. Not the more for all this may the intelligent desire of improvement flourish, nor does there come before us the pleasant vision of the man, in after times, slaking his mental thirst at the well-springs of knowledge, alone and far away though he may be from those who wrestled with him for a first draught. The very noise and clamour appear (for we, too, have seen our Scotch schools) as fatal to the growth of a spirit which should be trained to vanquish difficulties by quiet, continuous effort, rather than by violence.

Mr. Mann seems fully aware of the evils of this competitive system in the communication of religious knowledge; but why, though the impiety of the strife is more flagrant, should the effects on the religious character be much worse in one case than in the other?

Here, however, is a specimen, "an exact account," says Mr. Mann, "of a religious lesson which I saw and heard":—

"*Teacher.*—What sort of death was denounced against our first parents for disobedience?"

"*First Pupil.*—Temporal death."

"*T.* No (and pointing instantaneously to the second)."

"*Second P.* To die."

"The teacher points to the third, crying, 'Come away!' and then to the fourth, a dozen pupils leap on the floor, a dozen hands are held out, all quivering with eagerness."

"*Fourth P.* Spiritual death."

"*T.* Go up, *Dux* (that is, to the head of the class).

"And so of the following, from the Westminster Catechism, which, with all the proofs, is committed to memory."

"*Teacher.* What is the misery of that estate whereinto man fell?"

"*Pupil.* All mankind by their fall lost communion with God, &c."

"*T.* What sort of a place is hell?"

"*P.* A place of devils."

"*T.* How does the Bible describe it?"

"*First P.* (Hesitates.)

"*T.* Next. Next."

"*Fifth P.* A lake of fire and brimstone."

"*T.* Take 'em down four."

"And thus on these awful themes, a belief and contemplation of which should turn the eyes into a fountain of tears, and make the heart intermit its beatings, there is the same ambition for intellectual superiority as on a question in the multiplication table. There is no more apparent solemnity in the one case than the other."

We are curious to see what Mr. Mann would say on the Prussian system. His judgment on some points indeed might be anticipated, visiting these schools as he did, in order to cull materials for comparison with, and, if need be, improvement of, those of his own land, he would of course exult in their points of accordance.

Yet more, in some few particulars, would he triumph in the superiority of the birth-right privileges of a Massachusetts child.—"That child," he says, "would be as much astonished at being asked to pay any sum, however small, for attending our common schools, as he would be if payment were demanded of him for walking in the public streets, for breathing the common air, or enjoying the warmth of the inappropriate sun." Again in another, and more important point, he adverts to the conduct of the Prussian Government in taking *two* different religions under its exclusive patronage, and of teaching under the same roof, with equal authority, propositions contradicting each other.

"In the same school house, under the same roof, I have passed from one room to another, separated only by a partition wall, where different religions, different and irreconcileable ideas of God, and of his government and providence, of our own nature and duties, and of the means of salvation, were taught to the children by authority of law! and where a whole system of rites, books, teachers, officers, had been provided to enforce upon the children, as equally worthy of their acceptance, these hostile views. Everlasting, immutable truth—not merely the image, but the essence of God, not merely unchanging, but in its nature unchangeable and immortal—was made, after crossing a threshold, to affirm what it had denied and to deny what it had affirmed. The first practical notion which any child can obtain from such an exhibition, and the brightest minds will obtain it earliest, is, of the falsity of truth itself, or that there is no such thing as truth, and that morals and religion are only convenient instruments in the hands of rulers for controlling the populace. Such a conclusion must be an extinction of the central idea of all moral and religious obligation." • • • Wherein does the teaching of two hostile religions, by authority of law, differ from teaching contradictory theories in science, only as the former subject should be approached with more caution and reverence than the latter? Suppose some weak but proud mortal, having by means of birth or any other accident obtained a control over the destinies of men, should decree that the half of the children in his kingdom should be taught the Ptolemaic system of astronomy, according to which the sun revolves round the earth; and the other half, the Copernican system, according to which the earth revolves round the sun, could he retain the respect of any intelligent subject, either for his system or himself?"

Deplorable, also, are the effects of this unfaithfulness upon the teachers themselves. "I asked one of them, how he could teach what he disbelieved; and whether it did not involve the essence of falsehood." His reply was, "It is a lie of necessity. The government compel us to do this, or it takes away our bread."

With regard to the general character of these Prussian teachers, to the efficiency of their instructions, the admirable discipline of their schools, the absence of base and unworthy motives of action, no one can speak more strongly than this American Inspector.

"I speak of the teachers whom I saw, and with whom I had more or less of personal intercourse; and, after some opportunities for the observation of public assemblies or bodies of men, I do not hesitate to say, that if those teachers were brought together, in one body, I believe they would form as dignified, intelligent, benevolent-looking a company of men as could be collected from the same amount of population in any country. They were free alike from arrogant pretension, and from the affectation of humility. It has been often remarked, both in England and in this country, that the nature of a schoolmaster's occupation exposes him, in some degree, to overbearing manners, and to dogmatism in the statement of his opinions. Accustomed to the exercise of supreme authority, moving among those who are so much his inferiors in point of attainments, perhaps it is proof of a very well-balanced mind, if he keeps himself free from assumption in opinion and haughtiness of demeanour. Especially are such faults or vices apt to spring up in weak or ill-furnished minds,

* * * Among the Prussian and Saxon teachers whom I saw, there were not half a dozen instances to remind one of those unpleasant characteristics—what Lord Bacon would call 'the *idol* of the tribe' or profession—which sometimes degrade the name, and disparage the sacred calling of a teacher. Generally speaking, there seemed to be a strong love of the employment, always a devotion to duty, and a profound conviction of the importance and sacredness of the office they filled. The only striking instance of disingenuousness, or attempt at deception, which I saw, was that of a teacher, who looked over the manuscript book of a large class of his scholars, selected the best, and bringing it to me, said, 'In seeing one you see all.' Again :—' Though I saw hundreds of schools, and thousands, I think I may say, within bounds, tens of thousands of pupils, I never saw one child undergoing punishment, or arraigned for misconduct; I never saw one child in tears from having been punished, or from fear of being punished.' * * * I cannot say that this extraordinary fact was not the result of chance or accident. Of the probability of that others must judge. I can only say, that during all the time mentioned, I never saw a blow struck, I never heard a sharp rebuke given, I never saw a child in tears, nor arraigned at the teacher's bar for any alleged misconduct. On the contrary, the relation seemed to be one of duty first, and then affection, on the part of the teacher,—of affection first, and then duty, on the part of the scholar. * * * I have seen a teacher actually clap his hands with delight at a bright reply: and all this has been done so naturally and so unaffectedly, as to excite no other feeling in the residue of the children, than a desire, by the same means, to win the same caresses. What person worthy of the name of a parent, would not give anything, bear anything, sacrifice anything, to have his children, during eight or ten years of the period of their childhood, surrounded by circumstances, and breathed upon by sweet and humanizing influences like these? I mean no disparagement of our own teachers by the remark I am about to make. As a general fact, these teachers are as good as public opinion has demanded; as good as the public sentiment has been disposed to appreciate; as good as public liberality has been ready to reward; as good as the preliminary measures taken to qualify them would authorize us to expect. But it was impossible to put down the questioning of my own mind—whether a visitor could spend six weeks in our own schools without ever hearing an angry word spoken, or seeing a blow struck, or witnessing the flow of tears."

On questions of *method*, respecting which the American visitor naturally dwells at some length (these in his opinion being considerably in advance of the New World among the Continental States), we will not now enter, only briefly stating that Mr. Mann is a warm advocate for the *Phonic* method of elementary instruction in reading, and that he pronounces the Prussian schoolmasters to be admirable teachers of writing and drawing, of grammar, music, and very often, in an eminent degree, of geography. It is well known, that "every man is his own book." His library is in his own hand. "Promptly, and without pause or hesitation, from the rich resources of his own mind, he brings forth whatever the occasion demands."

"I remember calling one morning at a country school in Saxony, where everything about the premises, and the appearance of both teacher and children, indicated very narrow pecuniary circumstances. As I entered the teacher was just ready to commence a lecture on French History. He gave not only the events of a particular period in the History of France, but mentioned, as he proceeded, all the cotemporary sovereigns of neighbouring nations. The ordinary time for a lesson here, as well as elsewhere, was an hour. This was somewhat longer, for, towards the close, the teacher entered upon a train of thought from which it was difficult to break off, and rose to a strain of eloquence which it was delightful to hear. The scholars were all absorbed in attention. They had paper, pen, and ink, before them, and took brief notes of what was said. When the lesson touched upon cotemporary events in other nations, which, as I suppose, had been the

subject of previous lessons, the pupils were questioned concerning them. A small text-book of history was used by the pupils, which they studied at home."

We propose recurring to this interesting Report again, for the purpose of citing some of Mr. Mann's remarks on the *effects* of the Prussian schools, and the eager manner in which English writers, anxious to find arguments against the obnoxious clauses in the Factories Bill of 1843, have turned whatever might tell, fairly or unfairly, against the results of a national education in that country, against national education in another. In our second notice, also, we shall give a few of the reporter's remarks on English Schools.

A Tour in Ireland, with Meditations and Reflections. By Dr. James Johnson. Highley. Doctor James Johnson possesses originality of thought which commands attention even where it does not carry conviction. His opinions do not always bear the marks of careful formation, but they show the stamp of self-origination, which, in our days of cuckoo repetition, is a merit of no common order. On Irish subjects such independence of judgment is equally rare and valuable. We know of no work on Ireland more impartial: censures and sarcasms are bestowed on all sects, creeds, and parties, according to their deviations from the standard which the Doctor has framed for himself, and which, if put into the form of a creed, would startle all the divisions of Christendom. Candour and courage are among the chief characteristics of his work; and an utter disregard of arrangement and connexion its obvious defect. Never were there looser bonds in the association of ideas than those which hold together the meditations and reflections of Dr. James Johnson.

Every object on which his glance rested appears to have suggested a train of thought which lasted only until he was whirled past some other suggestive object, to which his mind turned with as little regard for the train he had dismissed as for the reveries of a broken doze. Like Doctor James Johnson, we shall not follow any strict order in our extracts, but give some of his most striking comments on men and things, as they present themselves to our notice. At Dublin Castle he notices a circumstance which suggests some unexpected inferences:

"The edifice appeared to me like a large almshouse, or a second-rate hospital; but, on seeing Justice, with her balance, above, and a soldier, with his musket, below, I felt, at once, that I was in the seat of power—indeed, of Vice-royalty. In no part of the world through which I have travelled, did I observe so many emblems of Justice, as in Ireland. Why, they are as numerous in this land of saints, as virgins or crosses are in Italy! And yet O'Connell has been crying out '*Justice for Ireland*' during the last twenty years! These Justices, in fact, were so multitudinous in Erin, that the Lord Lieutenant was absolutely ashamed of them, and ordered a considerable number of them to be taken down. These emblems of Justice have often puzzled me much. The goddess wears an immense bandage over her eyes and ears, so that sight and hearing are completely prevented. Now, I take it that the very essence or foundation of Justice is truth—and that, in the investigation of truth, as distinguished from falsehood—virtue from vice—merit from demerit—in short, good from evil, it is little less than insanity to close up the two principal avenues of our senses—the eye and the ear! Then, again, the scales of Justice are always in perfect equilibrium. Truth and falsehood—good and bad actions, all seem to be equal in the scales of Justice! But then it may be argued that Justice is a goddess, and requires neither eyes nor ears in the investigation of truth. Why does she place a bandage over those organs, if her divine nature renders her incorruptible? I strongly suspect that the symbolical figure, so prevalent in Ireland,

bodies forth a satire instead of a compliment—that it is meant to furnish a companion for the 'wild justice of the savage,' in the 'blind justice of the sage.'

The Corn Exchange affords an opportunity for a fair hit:—

"Knowing that Ireland was eminently an agricultural country, I entered this building, expecting to see magnificent samples of barley, wheat, oats, and rye. But my surprise was great to find a number of landlords and farmers busily employed, not in buying and selling corn, but in selling and sowing a kind of *tares*, under the name of Repeal Seed! I thought to myself that next year's crop would be a curious one! We have heard of sowing the wind, and reaping the whirlwind—of sowing dragon's teeth, and reaping grenadiers—but now we are sowing Repeal, with the pleasant prospect of reaping Rebellion!"

One of the greatest curiosities which our traveller witnessed in Ireland was "the monster meeting" at Tara Hill; his description of the scene is powerfully written, but displays rather too much causticity in its humour. One incident deserves to be noticed as a proof of the natural politeness of the Irish peasant:—

"When the Liberator first came in view I quitted my eyrie, and, with incredible difficulty and exertion, penetrated to within ten paces of the platform. This, however, I never could have effected, had it not been for the civility and assistance of the peasantry, who, seeing a stranger pressing forward, rendered me every facility in their power. More than once or twice I was actually lifted up by the brawny arms of a frieze-coat, and passed over his own and his neighbours' head! No people on the face of this earth would have done these things, except the kind-hearted peasantry of Ireland!"

Killarney receives rather more than its due meed of praise; every point in its landscape seems to have teemed with suggestions for discursive reflections; but we shall only quote the solution of a problem connected with the echoes of Spillane's bugle:—

"When the exhibition was over, and we were plodding up the Gap, I asked Spillane why Echo was always of the feminine gender? The Bugler scratched his head, as if trying to elicit something from his brain; but soon acknowledged that he was unable to give a satisfactory answer. He observed that, although he *heard* her every day, yet he had never *seen* her, and could not tell whether she wore petticoats or small clothes. All at once Spillane seemed struck with some new idea, and exclaimed—'May be, your honour, that Echo is represented as a female, because she always has the *last word*.' A newly-married couple were walking with us when Spillane delivered himself of this brilliant conception, and to the bride I referred the solution of the enigma. She quickly and spiritedly replied—'What Sir, would the Lords of the Creation wish to engross both the first and the last word? In that case, we poor women might lock up our tongues, as we do our jewels, to be used only on gala days.'"

A comparison between Church and Chapel at Killarney suggests some reflections which deserve attention:—

"If there be two places in this world, where perfect equality among mankind should obtain, they are the church and the grave. There is a nearer approach to this equality in the Catholic than in the Protestant House of Prayer. In the former, the rich and the poor, sit, stand, or kneel on the same level. In the latter, rank and wealth box themselves up with as much care, and, I fear, pride, as at the theatre or the Opera; '*Odi profanum vulgus et arco*,' is not written on the door of each pew, but it is engraven on the hearts of the inside passengers. A few narrow aisles are left for the indigent, as though they were travelling to a destination totally different from that of their neighbours in the boxes! A great cry is made about 'Church extension'; but it ought to be preceded by the removal of a great evil—'Pew-rentation.' True; the church is often unable to accommodate the congregation; and why? Because one third of the holy edifice is filled with wooden cribs or stalls, as in the Haymarket, for segregation of the great, and exclusion of the poor! What! Go to heaven in company with rags?—No, no. We

had rather travel, even in an opposite direction, in company with robes and feathers!"

A merited tribute is paid to the beneficial results arising from Bianconi's car establishment, and the cars themselves receive more praise than we should bestow upon them. An amusing incident in the discussion of the statistics of his cars, which Bianconi brought before the British Association, is thus explained:—

"My friend Bianconi astonished the savans of the British Association, at Cork, by a paradox in private economy. He stated that he had full 1500 horses in the car-services, and, of course, an immense number of drivers or conductors. His invariable rule was, to *diminish* the wages of his servants, in proportion to the length of their services, and to the merits of their conduct! The savans stared, as well they might, and some of the Repeaters held up their hands and exclaimed to their neighbours—'*There is another sample of the wrongs of poor Ireland—There is a specimen of the landlord tyranny.*' But Bianconi soon explained the enigma. When he first hired a driver, and before he had personal knowledge of his character and behaviour, he placed him on a little frequented line of road, where there was hardly any emolument beyond his actual wages. In such case, it was absolutely necessary that these wages should be comparatively high. But, in proportion as the driver conducted himself well, he was promoted to better roads where his emoluments increased, and consequently his wages were reduced."

While on the subject of the British Association, we must quote Doctor Johnson's explanation of the comparatively thin attendance at the Cork Meeting:—

"There is a strong, but not very open, prejudice against these scientific meetings throughout the whole of the Ultra-religionists, or Evangelicals, on both sides of the Channel, and in no place more strong than among the saints of Ireland. They believe that no science or knowledge can prosper or profit, when not accompanied by the 'Word of God,' and a solemn profession of the Thirty-nine Articles. They coincide a good deal with the protestation of the Mahomedan General respecting the Alexandrian Library. If that celebrated collection, said he, contains *more* than is found in the Koran, it is injurious—if *less*, it is useless. The godly consider that nothing can be true or useful that is not in the Bible. They strongly suspect, though they seldom avow it, that your investigations and discoveries will disturb some of the statements in Holy Writ. A gentleman, in Ireland, told me that the single Section of Geology, in the British Association, was calculated to bring down the curse of God on any country where that Section broached its Atheistical doctrines! Surprised at this asseveration, I asked him what there was in Geology that savoured of Atheism? 'Your geologists,' said he, 'would make this earth sixty instead of six thousand years old, which is contrary to the Word of God, and consequently Atheistical.' It was vain to argue that Moses and the Prophets could only deliver themselves in language that would be intelligible to the people, and that every word in the Bible was not to be taken in a strictly literal sense. Thus, when Joshua commanded the sun to stand still, it was surely not to be taken *literally*, as the sun was standing still before Joshua was born, and has continued to stand still ever since. If the Jews had been told that the earth stood still for some hours, at Joshua's command, they would have laughed at the absurdity—and yet that would have been the truth. The good man could bear this no longer, and turned from me with evident disgust."

We must remark, that if such scruples prevented any gentleman from attending the meeting, they ought previously to have deterred them from joining in the invitation to the Association to assemble in their city. The names of those belonging to the public bodies who voted to send these invitations would fill a small volume: the names of those who came to meet the gentlemen they had invited occupied but a page or two in a thin pamphlet. We do not go quite so far in censure as Doctor Johnson; but we must say, that the absentees on that occasion acted, at the least, a very undignified part. The same party

that condemned science has consistently set itself against National Education; our traveller, in a visit to one of the schools attached to the Presentation Convent in Galway, found an example of the system of instruction which has been denounced as dangerous. Our readers may be fairly left to form their own opinions respecting it:—

"Under the guidance of the amiable and accomplished Miss O'Donnell, who took a large share in the education of the girls, I spent several hours in the Convent, chiefly in the school-rooms, and observed attentively the mode of instruction and its results. The young students varied in age, from six to ten years, more or less, and the system of tuition appeared most excellent. I was present at several examinations, and propounded questions to the girls myself—not without astonishment at the proficiency to which they had attained. They had the history of the Bible, together with all the great events of the Jewish and Christian dispensations, at their fingers' ends—and answered correctly all questions on the leading points of Christian faith, doctrines, and morals, with remarkable clearness and intelligence! They were not embarrassed in the slightest degree by various cross-questions put to them by myself and others, proving that they were not crammed for the purpose of display, but well grounded in the subjects of their study. But their knowledge of geography, astronomy, statistics, &c. surprised me most of all. Over a very large chart of Europe, Miss O'Donnell caused some of her pupils, not more than nine or ten years of age, to trace with a wand, the various kingdoms, states, and cities, together with their population, religion, forms of government, &c., which they pointed out with an accuracy that was almost incredible. In reading, they displayed the same proficiency, as to orthography, grammar, &c. &c. Now when we consider that this system of national education is pervading every city, town and village in Ireland—that it penetrates even into the jail and the poor-house, we may form some anticipation of what 'Young Ireland' may be in the next generation! I have no hesitation in averring that the beggars' brats in the Bastilles are now receiving a more efficient and practical education than the children of the highest aristocracy in the three kingdoms! That the fruits of this system will eventuate in a moral—perhaps political revolution, before the end of the present century, I have no doubt. If knowledge be power—and if primary education be the essential step to the acquisition of knowledge, then let the upper classes of society look out for squalls! I do not wonder that a large portion of them are already alarmed, and that they are endeavouring indirectly to check the progress of national instruction, by clogging it with a creed which they hope the pupils will not swallow. But this is a vain expectation. The tiger, who has once tasted human blood, will never cease his struggles to get more of the crimson beverage; and so it is with the Irish youth. After tasting the fruit of the tree of knowledge, they will never desist from climbing, till every branch of that tree is robbed of its apples. It is allowed that knowledge, like love, is one of the greatest levellers of all distinctions and ranks—and that, like wealth, it begets the desire for more. It is also the great antagonist to error, and the ally, if not the parent of truth. All those, therefore, who are interested in the retention or propagation of error, will naturally oppose themselves to national education, as the avenue to knowledge and truth. This class of opponents includes incalculable myriads, open and masked!—The struggle between knowledge and truth, on one side, and ignorance and error, on the other, will be long, though the final issue can hardly be doubtful."

A visit to the island of Achill leads our traveller to discuss Mr. Nangle's merits as a missionary, and his conclusions are anything but favourable to that gentleman's proselytizing pretensions. He covers with ridicule the conspiracy which Mr. Nangle proclaimed to have been formed against himself and his Protestant colony; but as the tale has received no countenance in England, it is not worth while to quote its exposure. Too large a portion of the

work is bestowed upon the Repeal cry; the Doctor assails its advocates with unsparing severity, but he has hopes that 'Young Ireland' will cool down into common sense and seek for the cure of existing grievances in attainable remedies.

OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

The Forester's Daughter, a Tale of the Reformation, by the author of 'Seymour of Sudley,' &c., 3 vols.—'A Tale of the Middle Rhine' might have been the second title of this romance: the scene of which is laid between the *Dom* of Cologne and the Drachenfels, in one of the most picturesque districts in Christendom, including, among a thousand other objects, the Castle of Godesberg, and the fragment of Heisterbach Abbey, sleeping among its wooded hills—the very gem of Rhine ruins. Perhaps, to those who have beaten the high and by-ways of this country, Madame Wolfsberger's newest romance will come with a charm not wholly its own; since such will eke out the novelist's descriptions with recollection,—just as the lover's imagination gives to his Lady all the charms required to make frail mortal perfect. But—discarding memory's aid—the tale is full of life and interest: Archbishop Gebhard of Truchses, though not precisely the hero—the Romeo of the love intrigue being generally admitted to wear that title—is the principal personage. His secretary, the *Iago*, and the struggles of the Reformed religion, and the part taken therein by churchmen, and barons, and fanatical anabaptist preachers, would suffice, of themselves, to conjure up the atmosphere of storm in which the personages of Romance move fitly—were there not a Carmelite nun in the convent at Bonn, who escapes from her cell to air and liberty—is taken more than once—steadily befriended by a Jew, of the Sheva, not Shylock species, and finally won as wife by Herman Walberg, the Romeo aforesaid. In short, we liked 'The Pope and the Actor,' the last romance by our authoress, very well—rating it high among works of its kind: but the present one seems to us better; carefully written, and strongly exciting the pleasures (or pains?) of suspense.

The English Fireside: a Tale of the Past, by John Mills, Esq., 3 vols.—If we put our trust in his preface, Mr. Mills is so modest and sensible a man in the estimate of his own literary efforts, that we sincerely wish that he were a better novelist. He has been cheered into a wrong track, by those who, in their love for old English feeling, forget the line which separates mauldin from pathos, and, in their encouragement of old English manliness, make strange confusions of right and wrong. The tale of a fascinating poacher, whose ruin of a poor girl drives her to self-destruction, which takes the appearance of murder on his part—and in whose case the falsity of the second accusation is allowed entirely to efface all consciousness of the first wrong—even in another gentle maiden, who loves him with a love "strong as death"—is not one belonging to "an English fireside," we hope, either as to scene or audience. Mr. Mills knows the park and cover life of our country well, and describes it *con amore*. But to his men and women we cannot reconcile ourselves, and—believing that he can do better—we have little scruple in begging him to try again.

Gaston de Foix, a Romance of the Sixteenth Century, 3 vols.—Many a worse historical novel has come before us, than this anonymous romance. The style is good and flowing, the descriptions carefully written, and for scenes we have—

A gorgeous masque of Pageantry and Fear, as will be gathered from the title, and from a mere enunciation of the style and title of some of the principal personages. These are, Victor Hugo's fiendish and fascinating heroine, Lucrezia Borgia—the paladin who gives his name to the Romance—the Chevalier sans peur et sans reproche—Machiavelli, Cardinal Bembo, the Duchess of Mantua, &c. Notwithstanding all these attractions, the tale moves heavily, even for novel readers as professedly thorough-going as ourselves. We remember little, on closing it, that we care to know, or were not familiar with before opening its pages.

A Lecture on the Origin and Reception of several important Discoveries, delivered at the Bradford Me-

chanics' Institute

are deep—some shallow—some wise and some witty—but it is not often that we meet with one positively funny. To merit this character, there needs a certain unconsciousness on the part of the writer that he is doing the ridiculous, and yet a certain respectability of intellect to sharpen the contrast between his character and his position. Somewhat in this way have we been amused by Dr. Cryer, *Honorary Associate*, as we learn from the title-page, "of the Verulam Philosophical Society of London"! (see *Athenæum*, No. 403). The Doctor sets out with telling his audience that doubtless they had come to hear a man who was supposed to know something of the discoveries on which he meant to lecture: but he disabuses them at once of so amiable a prejudice, by refusing even to profess any such knowledge. So expect not, he says, to hear of Watt's Steam Engine, or Sir Humphry Davy's Safety Lamp, or the most approved methods for the consumption of smoke, or of any other like thing—but instead permit me to substitute the most amusing anecdotes, apocryphal or otherwise, apropos to the ostensible subjects of the lecture. Having, in other words, made this apology, the Doctor unfolds his budget of miscellanies; going the round of the physical sciences in double-quick time: after which he advances into the metaphysical field, and here indeed does tremendous execution. He seeks especially to convince his audience that, "the true nature of mind cannot be discovered by reflecting on our own consciousness," and therefore directs them for evidence to the never-failing demonstrations of phrenology and phreno-mesmerism. In answer to certain clerical objections to their validity, he conclusively observes that "when Dr. Jenner introduced his Prophylactic, sermons were also preached against vaccination;" and Massey, a learned divine, announced that it was no new art, inasmuch as Job had been inoculated by the Devil." Such is Dr. Cryer's lecture, replete with scepticism whenever the metaphysical aspects of science demand attention, and overflowing with credulity whenever his mind prefers a physical direction. How hard it is for some men to maintain a well-balanced intellect, and observe the just mean between two extremes. But the lecturer indirectly meant to be amusing; and perhaps it is in his favour that he has been more so than he intended.

Human Nature: a Philosophical Exposition of the Divine Institution of Reward and Punishment.—Like the speculator in her 'Sick Room,' the essayist before us makes much more account of Being than of Doing. Man is not, according to him, appointed to do much, but to be good. We talk too much of Doing, too little of Being. If a man be good, all his *doings* will, of necessity, be *well doings*. On this principle it is that the author seeks to explain the institution of reward and punishment. He is, therefore, of opinion, that the final punishment consists not in remorse, as sometimes argued, but in an ultimate insensibility to goodness, which is opposite to true being, as death is to life. He brings Scripture to his aid, but confesses that the theologians are against, and the mystics with him. But he consoles himself by the reflection, that "in no time or country has Christianity ever been exhibited in its simple integrity," and hopes that by an increase and progression of Being, man may assimilate towards the fullness of God; for as man's nature is infinitely progressive, it will ever aspire after a realization, expansion, and accession of those attributes which are perfect and infinite in divinity. Such is the theory of this little book, embodying an amiable vision, with which only the contemplative mind can sincerely sympathize.

Argumentative Sermons, by the Rev. W. G. Tucker.—A small volume of very poor discourses, meagre in style, and weak in execution. The terrors of the other world are much dwelt upon as an argument in favour of a virtuous life in this. The reality of "eternal fire" is an anxious topic with the preacher; and, altogether, he appeals more frequently to fear than to love.

Hymn to the Week above Every Week, Passion Week, by T. H. Gill.—A lyrical poem indicating enthusiasm, with occasional energy of expression, and facility of versification.

People's Book for Sleswick, Holstein, and Lauenburg—[Volksbuch, &c.]—We might make a commentary of more importance than its text, and we

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are tempted to do so with this little book—might write, at its suggestion, an essay on our want of local literature. It is well-known that literary productivity is not centralized in Germany, as it is with us; that neither Berlin nor Leipsic is there what London is for literary England. One of the peculiarities of German literature is, that men of learning and taste contribute towards the information and amusement of their provincial neighbours, by the publication of books of local interest for the people in the various divisions of the country, as in the present example, an annual miscellany for the inhabitants of Sleswick, Holstein, and Lauenburg. It contains histories and traditions relating to these provinces, a few samples of poetry, and various essays—among others, an exhortation to the people, urging them, à la Cobbett, to return to the use of old German beer, that they may enjoy the firm legs and ruddy cheeks of their forefathers. We leave Father Mathew to deal with the dangerous error of Prof. Biernatzki, the writer of this *récapitulation* for antique robustness. But, to come to our own fancy. Literature should have a head, and limbs also. In the present day, when the metropolitan press is so crowded that to gain a reputation, or exert any remarkable influence there, becomes more and more difficult, we should like to see the experiment of a local literature conducted more respectably than hitherto. We know of nothing in England that deserves to be considered as a provincial literature. Many authors and literary institutions are scattered over the country; but they have little influence on the people around them. Would it not seem remarkable, if we were not inured to the conventional anomaly, that our Universities should have so little influence, moral or intellectual, upon the people in their immediate neighbourhoods? We cannot here enter into the consideration of the topic we have started. At present, we must leave this little book with the remark which it suggested—that the literary world talks too much to itself and too little to the great illiterate world all around it; and that a local literature, well conducted, might be an experiment worthy of a trial.

Fifth Annual Report of the Registrar General of Births, Deaths, and Marriages, 2nd Edition, revised and corrected.—It is not often that a work of this character—and a substantial volume, too, of more than six hundred pages—arrives at a second edition.

Statistical Companion to the Pocket Book, corrected to 1844, by C. R. Weld.—A useful compilation made professedly from official documents presented to parliament.

The Oculist's Vade Mecum, by John Walker.—This is a good summary of diseases of the eye, useful for the purpose of refreshing the memory of the practitioner, and will afford the student a complete outline of the extensive field of ophthalmic surgery.

Percy's Reliques of Ancient English Poetry.—This neat reprint is the first of a series to be entitled, 'The Percy Library,' which is to include the early poets and prose writers of England.

Poetical Patchwork, by W. J. A.—A volume of verses by a modest student, indicating grace of fancy and delicacy of thought and sentiment. It says much in his favour that he is dissatisfied with his own book; showing that he has ideas of future excellence, which we hope may be realized. Of the general character of his style the reader may judge by the following:—

Morn at Sea.

Tis glorious on the waters, (when young morn,
Shows in the golden east his rosy face,
Laughing to see night's swift retreat;) to trace
Our path midst spray and foam, like blossoms torn
From the green hedgerow, when May clothes the thorn
In robes of purest white. With rapid race
The light sail coyly flies the wind's embrace,
Eager to be pursued the while. As corn
Bends to the Autumn breeze, so bends the mast;
While like a sportive dolphin seems my boat;
And I, Arion on his back, may float.
And glimpse the mermaids as we hurry past,
Feeling into the depths; where broken rocks
Protect sea flow'r's to deck their braided locks.

This brochure contains many sonnets, some of them, we regret to add, irregular in their construction. Let the author beware of consulting his ease in the act of composition. "He serves the Muses stringily and ill," who is chary of labour. Poetry is an art; and no man can become an artist without close application.

List of New Books.—The Value of Landed Property demonstrated, by Layton Cooke, Land Surveyor, royal 8vo. 2s. cl.—Simmonds's Colonial Magazine and Foreign Miscellany, Vol. I., Jan. to April, 1844, 8vo. 12s. cl.—Miller's (Rev. E.) Sermons preached principally at Bognor, 8vo. 10s. bds.—Montgomery's (Robert) Gospel before the Age, 8vo. 10s. cl.—Night of Toil, by the author of 'Peep of Day,' 2nd edit., 5s. cl.—Prayers for a Fortnight, 1 vol. 18mo. 2s. cl. swd.—Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, illustrated edition, oblong folio, 21 outlines by Rollis, after Selous, 12. 1s. hf-bd.—Dauvin's Reformation, new translation, by Beveridge, Vol. II., royal 12mo. 4s. cl.—The Terms of Communion at the Lord's Table, and with the Church of Christ, by R. B. Howell, 12mo. 3s. 6d. cl.—The Royal Calendar and Court and City Register, for 1844, 12mo. 5s. red sheep, or with Index of Names, 6s. 6d. bd.—Macgregor's Commercial Statistics, Vols. I. and II., royal 8vo. 12. 11s. 6d. each, cl.—Kerrigan's Complete Mathematical and General Navigation, 2nd edit. 2 vols. royal 8vo. 12. 7s. cl.—Historical Sketches of Statesmen of the Time of George the Third, by Lord Brougham, 3 vols. 8vo. 2l. 5s.—Blair's Chronological and Historical Tables from the Creation to the Present time, with additions and corrections, by Sir R. H. Ellis, imp. 8vo. 17. 11s. 6d. half-mro.—Memoirs of David Nasmith, by the Rev. J. Campbell, royal 12mo. 10s. 6d. cl.—Gallus; or, Roman Scenes of the Time of Augustus, by Becker, post 8vo. 12s. cl.—Memoirs of a Muscovite, edited by Lady Bulwer Lytton, 3 vols. post 8vo. 17. 11s. 6d. bds.—Tales of a Lay Brother, 1st Series, 'Neville's Cross,' 3 vols. post 8vo. 17. 11s. 6d. bds.—"Russia," by the Marquis De Custine, 3 vols. post 8vo. 17. 11s. 6d. bds.—Waverley Novels, Abbotsford Edition, 'The Abbot,' royal 8vo. 15s. cl.; 'The Monastery,' royal 8vo. 15s. cl.—Brettell's Hand-book of the Isle of Wight, 3rd edit. 12mo. 5s. cl.—Instructions in Household Matters, 12mo. 1s. 6d. cl.—On Dismenoreham and other Utter Affections, by Edward Rigby, M.D., 8vo. 6s. cl.—Hyperion: a Romance, by H. W. Longfellow, 32mo. 2s. swd.—Introductory Book to Ollendorff's Method of Learning German, by H. G. Ollendorff, royal 12mo. 3s. cl.—New Pocket Dictionary of the Italian, French, and English Languages, by S. E. Petroni and J. Davenport, square, 8s. roan.—Excursions in the Vicinity of London, 12mo. 6s. swd.—Guide to Useful Knowledge, by Charles Butler, 18mo. 1s. 6d. cl.

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE.

East Coast of China,
Chamoo, province of Fokien.

You are probably aware that this is one of the stations for the opium vessels on the coast, and that the trade, even during the war, was carried on in spite of the Mandarins. An amusing anecdote was related to me by one of the captains, which will give you an idea of the state of this part of the country. Some of the opium merchants came on board one of the ships in the Bay, and requested the loan of some guns, for each of which they offered to deposit a large piece of sycee, which was, of course, much more than its value; and promised to return the guns in a day or two. When asked what they intended to do with them, they replied, that the mandarins and officers of government were expected to levy the taxes, and that they were determined not to pay. They said they only wanted four or five guns for the purpose; these were granted them, and in a day or two, when they returned them, inquiry was made if they had been successful. "Oh, yes," they said, "they had driven the mandarins over the hills." It certainly had been no very difficult matter to effect this object.

The inhabitants in the towns and villages around the Bay, are frequently at war with each other; in this they resemble the borderers of our own country in ancient feudal times, when "might was right." Like them, too, a sort of black mail is levied, and treaties of peace are concluded by one of the parties paying a stipulated sum to the other. This, however, I am sorry to say, is not the worst trait in their character, they are the greatest thieves and robbers in existence; and as I had a small specimen of their propensity in this respect, I will relate to you the incidents of a day's journey amongst them. I had sent my Chinese servant on shore the day previous, with orders to gather all the plants he could find in a certain direction, which I pointed out to him before he left the ship; but he returned to me the next morning with only a few useless things, which he had evidently gathered very near the landing-place on the shore. I felt much annoyed at this, and was very hard upon him for his conduct, but he excused himself by saying that he durst not go in the direction to which I had pointed, as he would have been beaten and robbed by the Chinew men. This I did not believe at the time, and imagined that it was laziness on his part, for, like most of the Chinese, who receive a specified sum per month for their services, he was rather remarkable for this propensity; I, therefore, determined to set out on the day following, and give him the treat of a long walk for his conduct. The following morning was fine, and I jumped into a China

pan-pan, which I had hired for the purpose, and reached the shore after being completely drenched by the breakers, which roll high along this bay, and render the landing, particularly in small boats, rather dangerous. When I got on shore and proceeded to walk in the direction I intended, the boatman and others came round me and attempted to dissuade me from going there, by intimating that I was sure to be attacked by the Chinew men, and robbed or murdered. I here saw signs of warfare in the shape of matchlocks and long bamboo poles in the hands of the Chinamen who, as my servant informs me, are obliged to carry them in their own defence. I almost wished, then, that I had brought off, from the ship, a few of the crew for protection—indeed, Capt. Woodrow kindly offered to send some with me when I set out—but it was now too late, and I determined to put a bold face on the matter and proceed. I set out towards the hills, on one of which stands the Chamoo Pagoda which I was anxious to visit on my route, as I expected to get a good view of the country from its summit. Many acres of ground here, all along the shore, are used for evaporating sea-water and forming salt, which is a great article of trade in China. As the traveller proceeds inland, the ground, capable of cultivation, is covered with crops of sweet potatoe and earth-nut, which form the staple productions of this part of the country; often between the different fields, one stumbles upon the graves of the natives, sometimes finely ornamented with those half-circular forms, so common, and, at other times, without any ornament whatever, of course, depending for such things upon the wealth and tastes of the relatives. The hills are like those I have formerly described at Amoy (*ante*, p. 223), rocky and barren, having here and there a few wild plants growing on the sides of the ravines, some of which, however, are very beautiful. The Pagoda stands on the top of the highest hill, and affords an excellent land-mark to the vessels on the coast. On my way towards the hills, I was frequently surrounded by some hundreds of the Chinese, and was evidently considered a great natural curiosity. The country, although barren, teems with inhabitants; indeed, I almost thought the very stones were changing into Chinamen, so rapidly did the crowd accumulate at times. The sight was sometimes ludicrous in the extreme—here was I, on the side of some ravine, gathering plants and flowers, then on the top; on each side, stood three or four hundred of the Chinese of both sexes and of all ages, with their long tails hanging behind them and reaching to the ground, the ladies with their small cramped feet, and the costume of the whole striking, to an Englishman not long from home. They were generally civil, but I was at last likely to get into trouble with a silk neck-cloth which I had on, and to which some of them took a great fancy, telling me that it would look so well round their heads—for they wear a handkerchief like a turban in this part of China. I was much amused with the various plans they took to get it from me: one brought a handful of chillies which he held out in one hand, and with the other pointed to the handkerchief, intimating that he would close the bargain in that way; another did the same with a few earth-nuts, and some of the rest brought me some weeds, all, however, taking care to offer nothing of value. I blundered Chinese to them as well as I could, which was the cause of a laughable incident happening regarding the same neck-cloth. Two of the men ran off to the village as fast as they could, desiring me to wait until they returned. I could not divine the reason of this, but in order to please them, I complied with their wishes, when they soon returned with a bottle of sam-shew, or spirits, which they supposed I had asked for, and which they now tendered for my neck-cloth, and evidently considered the tender irresistible; the crowd, however, was now rather too great, and I walked towards the hills, and began to ascend,—a plan which I always take when I want to get away from the Chinese, as they are generally too lazy to follow far where much exertion is required; and, in this instance, the manoeuvre answered my purpose, for I was soon left to my own meditations. When I reached the highest hill, on which the Pagoda stands, and looked back and round on the level plain through which I had come, I was at no loss as to where the inhabitants came from by whom I had been surrounded, as large villages or

towns, densely peopled, met my eye in all directions here, although they were not visible when I was on the plain.

On reaching the Pagoda, I was astonished to find it in a most dilapidated condition, almost ruinous, although the main part of it, which had been strongly built, was nearly entire. A few stone josses or gods—a dome, with a double wall, containing a winding staircase leading to the different balconies from the bottom to the top, through which the wind howls in a most dismal manner, as we think it does in all ruins—is all that I can say about the Pagoda. I went over the whole of it, and obtained an excellent view of the surrounding country for many miles on all sides, which, as far as the eye can reach, has the same barren and rocky character. No one noticed or molested me in any way; indeed, as I said before, the Chinese do not like the exertion of following me to the hills, so that, in this instance, I was secure from their intrusion.

After enjoying the view of the country from the top of the hills, I again descended to the low ground in another direction than that by which I had come; where I no sooner was, than I was again surrounded by the natives. It was now late in the afternoon, and my servant, I believe, felt rather tired, as I intended he should before I left the ship in the morning. He now began to scheme a little, to save himself from walking any farther than he could possibly help; and as I sometimes took rather wide circular routes in search of plants, he generally took the nearest way in the direction which he knew we had ultimately to go. A few of the Chinese now began to follow me rather closely, and, from their manner, I suspected that their intentions were not good; but as they pretended to take me to some place where I should see some good plants and flowers, I allowed them to accompany me, and tried to keep them all in good humour. We came, at last, in sight of a large mansion, standing in a retired part of the country, and I was proceeding with perfect confidence towards it, when the Chinamen began to press more closely round me, and feeling a hand in my pocket, I turned quickly round, and saw the thief running off with a letter which he had abstracted. As soon as he saw he was discovered, he threw it on the ground, and made off; when, putting my hand into my pocket, I found that I had lost several things of more value. This incident stopped my progress, and made me look about for my servant, who I now saw attacked by about eight or ten of the Chinese, in another direction; they had now surrounded him, presenting their knives, and threatening to stab him if he offered the least resistance, at the same time endeavouring to rob him and strip him of everything of the slightest value. I saw instantly that we were in a dangerous condition, and left my pickpockets and set off to his assistance as fast as I could. When the Chinamen saw me coming, they all took to their heels and left him, making off towards their companions, who were looking on from a distance. My servant was pale with fright when I reached him, and very much excited; but I could not pity him, for I told him he richly deserved it, on account of his laziness in not keeping up with me. I now suspected that my friends were leading me into a trap, which once in I might have found some difficulty in extricating myself from, and judged it more prudent to leave them and proceed homewards without any more civilities, as the sun was setting, and the twilight being so short in these regions, it was nearly dark. My servant, too, was completely cured for that day, and kept as close to me as he could all the way back.

When we reached the village to which the boat belonged, I saw the boatman looking out, and he came to meet us in high spirits, saying he had expected us long ago, and was frightened the Chinachow men, as he called them, had either robbed or murdered us. It was now ebb tide, and there was about half a mile of bare sand to cross, with the surf rolling and breaking furiously beyond it. The boatmen at first said it was impossible to go to the ship before morning, and I had made up my mind to stay all night amongst them; they promised me good chow-chow (food) and quarters until morning. I thanked them for all their kind offers, but intimated that I would be much better pleased if it was possible to get on board of the ka pan with three masts (ship), as I was to sail for Chusan early in the morning. They

now seemed to change their minds; a sign was made to some boatmen hard by, and immediately all was in motion. A boat was carried by a number of men across the sands to the water, and I jumped upon the back of a stout Chinaman, who scampered like a race-horse across the wet sands and deposited me in the boat. They rowed us through the rolling surf in a masterly manner. I reached the ship, although completely drenched with wet, all safe and sound, but with my opinion of the Chinese considerably lowered by the adventures of the day. R. F.

THE ENGLISH ACADEMY AT ROME.

Rome.

The drawing-room, to which I am now about to introduce you, (see ante, p. 429) seemed the interior of some dismantled church; and still a half-ruined stucco-angel, that, unlike the arch-fiend, "had lost all his original brightness," might be seen dimly fluttering aloft, attempting, as it were, like some forlorn barn-haunting owl, to establish a precarious perch on the narrow architrave of the arch of the roof, now literally lamp-black.

Below, on the left, behind a forest of unengaged easels, standing thick as ship-masts in a harbour, glimmered in plaster the sublime bulk of the Vatican Torso, like a huge moon rising dimly between the trunks of trees;—on the right, from amid heaps of rubbish, stools, umbrellas, &c., arose, stately as the cedar from among tangled underwood, the long stark limbs of the Belvidere Apollo. Farther, on one side of the spot which was once occupied by the high altar of the Maronites, stood, raised to a proper elevation, a plaster gentleman without his skin, one arm extended, very kindly demonstrating his own muscles for the benefit of the company; on the other, a human skeleton, hunched up by the neck, "grinned horrible."

In front, between these two figures, where the high altar itself once stood, an intense lamp-light fell on the dazzling flesh of the naked model, driving in heroic attitude an imaginary pair of steeds, with an imaginary whip in his lifted right hand, imaginary reins in his left, and standing in an imaginary biga. His whip was a sort of halter, contrived to support his arm, during the two hours of his toil, at that painful elevation; his reins other cords fastened to some fixed object before him; and his imaginary biga a log of wood, on which the right foot was planted, to give the necessary inclination to his position. Notwithstanding the rule nature of these accessories, a more glorious form I think I never beheld, and I doubt whether finer limbs ever figured in the Olympian Circus, on real biga or quadriga. He was a young fellow from Sonnino, I think they said, a savage little town, famous for breeding banditti, nested in the Volscaen mountains, above Terracina. A Sonnino Alcibiades, tearing along in a visionary chariot round the little church of the Maronites! A large red cloth, suspended behind the stage, on which the heroic model or the model-hero was elevated, threw a glow into the shadows of his flesh, which reminded you of the brilliant reflections in Rubens's and Reynolds's naked figures. A stove was placed a little behind the model, on the right, tended by a lad, who divided his attention between the fire and the lamps. Between us and the shining central object—the model I have described—were visible a row of dark heads, some capped, some bare, or rather furnished with a profusion of wild Medusa-like locks, each accompanied by a shade-lamp on the left, in perpetual motion, glancing up and down, from the model to certain boards before them, supported against a desk which ran across the room. These, it was not difficult on a nearer inspection to perceive, belonged to the students of the Academy, who were very busily and silently engaged in tracing, upon papers of drab and blue tints, a charcoal outline of the figure before them. These gentlemen, I found, were divided into two ranks, one before the other, the front rank with their feet on the ground, the other raised theatre-wise behind. One, indeed, detached from the rest, had set up his easel in a gloomy corner behind the second rank, and apparently looking forward with some impatience to the more fascinating occupation of colouring, no doubt viewed the necessity of making an outline previously as a burdensome obligation.

Among the occupants of the rear bench I recognized our drowsy friend of the *café*, and judge of my

surprise, when, as he turned round, and recognized my companion, he addressed him by one of the most illustrious names among British artists. "Ha! —," said he, "is that you? come to look over, eh! you'll make us all nervous."

"I wish I could make you all correct draftsmen" replied — in an undertone, with a sigh, evidently contemplating some of the charcoal delineations with a shudder, and turning from them with a suppressed groan.

Really, there can be few more melancholy spectacles, I imagine, to the eyes of a finished artist, than the various attempts at expressing the model by the less gifted members of an academy. And if anything could visibly demonstrate the necessity of encouraging a school for drawing from life, of keeping it up, and affording it assistance, it would be the lamentable deficiency in the power of design, which the inspection of the studies at an academy discovers in the majority of the students; and, what is an important consideration, of students by no means destitute of talent, but simply unpractised in drawing from the naked figure; the difficulties of which are so discouraging, and in which ultimate success has been attained by so few, and which yet is so essential to all figure painters, that a man who undertakes such a task, with any chance of succeeding in it, requires and deserves all the assistance possible.

While this reflection passed through my mind, I could not help regretting the uneasy, uncomfortable, gloomy, ill-arranged, crowded look of the place before me—the necessary consequence of contracted funds; and I thought, if I were a student, how much discipline, how much constraint, I should have to exercise, before I could drag myself nightly to such an untempting-looking locality, to undertake a performance beset with so much difficulty.

Could I make, thought I, a dozen wealthy men, well-wishers to the Arts, partake these sentiments, I would have a College founded here, where the theatre for drawing from the naked figure, instead of being a cramped school of this description, shunned by the majority of the students from its gloom and inconvenience, and where the few who repair thither for study are obliged to elbow one another for want of room, should be so spacious, commodious, cheerful, and well lit, that the students should crowd thither as to a pleasurable resort, and have as little reluctance to sit down to their drawing, as a man has to go to his club after dinner. They should have a gallery, where they might gradually form a collection of casts from the Antique; they should have a library, to be furnished gradually with the books necessary to assist them in their studies, whether of anatomy, costume, engravings of pictures and monuments, or treatises on the theory and practice of colour and design, &c. Yea, and all the rooms well lit and warmed,—an institution profitable to the students, accessible and attractive to the English visitors at Rome, and respectable in the eyes of foreigners. Neither should I despair, in the course of time, of seeing an exhibition of the works of English painters in Rome, which should eventually, in merits of a higher class, form a proud rival to the annual displays in London.

While I was absorbed in these reflections, suddenly, at a signal from a neighbouring church-clock, which was preceded and accompanied by the pulling out of a watch here and there, and inquiries from this and that student whether the first hour was up, the model removed his cramped foot from the log of wood which represented his biga, unhitched his gallied right hand from the noose in which it hung, and let drop his reins; and stretching his strained limbs, proceeded to extinguish the lamp under which he stood. He then descended from his stage, and crouched himself by the stove, looking in his new position, as I thought, more picturesque and classical than ever. Most of the young artists extricated themselves from their seats on the forms, not however, in some cases, without an effort; some few remained shading up their backgrounds, and rubbing their stumps to and fro with much energy, not unaccompanied with noise. The dismounted formed into little knots and groups discussing various topics. A quarter of an hour was allowed the model to repose himself, after which he rose, reascended his stage, lit the lamp, and assumed his old posture, while the students got somehow into their places again. In the meantime, thanking my illustrations

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guide for his kindness, I made the best of my way back into the street, and thence threading the dark alleys by which we came, occupied by the reflections which were suggested to me by the scene I had just witnessed, I regained my apartment. I sat down and made some notes of my visit to the English Academy, from which the preceding pages have been put together. I forgot by the way to mention one interesting fact, which is, that this same little *ci-devant* church of the Maronites was once Flaxman's studio.

I left Rome shortly after, and did not return for some years. When I came back I made some inquiries about the English Academy. I found that the change anticipated by my friend —, namely, of transferring the management of the Academy into the hands of the younger students, had been effected; and already the beneficial effects of this revolution were felt, in the provision of a more commodious place for assembling to prosecute their studies, and in other improvements. The number of students had greatly increased, and by the exertions of the committee an interest had been created in the minds of the English residing in Rome concerning the Institution, which was very speedily followed up by considerable donations from persons of distinction, as well as contributions from the Royal Academy and British Institution: but still a helping hand is required from Old England—and a few words on this subject I reserve for another letter.

SUGGESTIONS ON MODERN POETRY: WITH HINTS FOR A VINDICATION OF PUBLIC TASTE.

BY ONE OF THE PUBLIC.

The letter of your Correspondent A. (p. 338) upon the statue of Lord Byron, will, I trust, call from the Public that strong expression of just and honest sympathy, which is so deeply felt in private. Let us hope that it will not cease until it has set up, in some position worthy of so great a genius, the image of the Bard they love so well, in a form which will add another gem to modern Art. Let us, at once, be charitable, if we cannot yet be just. The time will surely come when we shall be ashamed of our inhumanity and malice; for how deeply soever England must mourn the occasional desecration of a genius so various and magnificent, yet none of her bards have written so much of the finest Poetry from which so little need be taken. The Eternal 'Childe' is unexceptionable. All his Turkish and other tales and dramas may be read without a blush; and, if some passages of 'Cain' were omitted, without Piety being shocked. Add to these his miscellaneous poems—of themselves an immortality for any other bard—and where, the production of a single mind, can we produce such exquisite and various poetry so free from taint? 'Don Juan' even may be purified. Its most beautiful scenes, and its tenderest verses, are those which produce no improper effect. But alas! how much has been done, not by this matchless work, but by critics, to degrade the public taste. The fairest scenes of genius are now fouled by the cold impurities of critical remarks, which, with the worst possible taste, and lamentable judgment, the person intrusted with their late compilation has thought proper to immortalize! Why were they retained? They point out things which the ordinary reader, whose feelings are absorbed by the tale, never thinks of. Many, I know, who had previously read this wonderful work, have felt a deep sorrow and intense disgust, to find meanings and allusions pointed out which they had never discovered. Only the sweetest sinks into the heart of the true lover of poetry. It instinctively rejects the impure, because it cannot see it. But to have it, like a finger-post, coldly pointed out by mind that cannot go along with your own! oh, this is a desecration of Art. We discover impurity only in the exposure, never in the nakedness of genius. Believe me, for I speak to the fact of some, that there are thousands of persons who have, and would read, without thought of wrong, the whole of that sweetest dream that ever came into a poet's mind; where the beauty of the Cyclades entertains her lover with all that Grecian art and genius could combine to fill, to overflowing, every sense of the beautiful. No poet or painter that ever lived has done so much to spread a love of the fine arts as Byron, to soften and refine the people, to make thereby the gentleman in all classes, as I propose, by-and-bye, to show. For this alone we owe

him a great debt. We cannot but call him THE POET OF THE BEAUTIFUL. From Chaucer downwards, no bard can pretend to dispute his sole claim to this title. Look but at that one scene just mentioned. The lone and beautiful shore; the shining pebbles and the shells of childhood; the classical *séte*, the unrivalled landscape; the noblest lyric to Liberty, even a Greek poet ever sung; the sweetest of all emotions, worked out with a power, a knowledge, a tenderness, which surpass anything of the sort Shakspeare or other bards wrote, and combined with accessories never before attempted; all in such perfect keeping with the intensity and loneliness of the passion, as continually to draw upon every sense of the beautiful: the starlit walk with that fair and innocent girl on noiseless sands where no footfall disturbed the silence; the Ave Maria—the hour of prayer, and the hour of love; the charm of twilight, the moon rising into sight; the solemn hush of eve; the sparry sea-worn grot; the gentle plashing of the waves; the wind's low murmur; the absorbing joy, the Paradise we catch a glimpse of; and then the mournful change of a happiness, like all earthly things, too deep to last; the love that could not be torn away; the separation; madness made so desolate yet so soft; the gentle heart breaking, wordless with its grief; and the love eternal living on that beautiful face which Death's remorseless hand could not kill. And with what magic is it worked! Through all these runs a pathos which is felt to be spontaneous, it goes so sadly down to the heart, and these mysterious fountains of its unfathomable depths are opened, and pour out their irrepressible waters. What story is this! All that the imagination can conceive of love and the beautiful is here planted amidst the sweetest and softest scenes of nature. All is repose. The whole so tender, impassioned, and mournful, told in the simplest words in the language; not a line of what is called poetical diction. Yet is it of the purest poetry of the heart,—water flowing on from some pure, beautiful, and exhaustless spring, with an unpremeditated harmony, in a measure made for its expression. All these surpassing combinations unite to make this exquisite tale of—

The loved, the lost, the beautiful Haidee,
The sweetest episode in Poesy.

And in this fairest Ideal that ever blessed a poet's vision, how often do we not recall our youth, and those fresh feelings of the heart which can never return! In such fair scenes, we hope they are to come hence. Amidst the coarse realities of existence, it is such creations as these that purify and soften; it is not profound truths. Whilst then we cannot prevent such poetry as this from being, as it now is, read by every class, should we not endeavour to make the work as unexceptionable as its character will permit? What can be the use, for instance, of retaining such low and vulgar comments as these: "The same game of guilt and abandonment (!) is played over again," and other passages of a still more offensive description. To read this surpassing work (which as long as human nature is what it is, will be read more than any other in our language) as it first came fresh and sparkling from the font of genius, before Criticism had polluted it with its mud, and to read it afterwards with these cold scrutinizing comments perpetually obtruding themselves to mar the beauty of the scenes, and destroy the intense sympathy they create, produces a change in the mind like that described after "the Fall." Our eyes have been opened—we see what we saw not before, and we bitterly mourn those fresh feelings of the heart, which preserved the purity of the flowers, and thought not of the soil in which they grew. I cannot bear to see the narrow analysis of criticism touch and blight, with its cold hand, these beauties of genius, and tear up its most fragrant exotic to tell us in what compost so much loveliness arose. Genius is a thing so mysterious, going and coming like the wind where it listeth, and, with Byron, was so entirely impulsive, so beyond the calculations, the command, or requirements of Reason, that when it swept over the earthy of his wondrous composition, and the divine could not wholly purify the alloy of mortality, we ought not, I think, to have taken so malicious a pleasure to point out the traces of the mixture. Real poetry is written from the heart, and speaks to the heart, not to the head, and should, therefore, be criticized by the heart, not by the head. Seldom,

indeed, has criticism exalted the works of literary genius, but often debased them. Alas! how much vice is learnt by its exposure. Certain it is, that criticism has done Byron more harm than his works. It points out either what the poet did not mean should be so taken, or what he had so exquisitely disguised beneath the flowers of an unequalled fancy, or hurried the reader on by the surpassing interest of the subject, that those whose sympathies are engaged—and for these alone poetry is written—would never discover the evil. The criticisms on his writings have been far more suggestive of ill, than the writings themselves. Let it not be supposed, that I am defending some of the unmistakeable scenes of this most singular production of the human mind; I cannot. I only lament that a refined taste should be so shocked by such observations; that so great a genius, and such unimaginable scenes of beauty, should be debased by those who ought to have treated Art with more respect, and the fame of their great writers with less exposure. To suppose that the disclosures of the head will remove the impressions produced on the heart by genius, displays no knowledge whatever of human nature. What purpose do they serve? Fancy a cold unsympathizing critic doing the same to THE Venus, or to Titian's warm and living beauties. Nothing can more pollute public morals and taste than these senseless attempts. Let Genius alone. The highest will never go far wrong, and the people will never encourage what will injure them. The way that Byron's immortal works have been spoken of, is not the ex-methode of legitimate criticism. That is not the true method of looking at art. We do not want our eyes to be opened in this offensive manner. It can never improve our morals or our taste. The true critic will so reverence Genius, that he will delicately clothe, not undress it; but how often does this misapplied science unhappily disclose what Genius itself never suggests.

Where Time shall place Byron this age cannot, perhaps, with certainty decide. In conception of the spiritual sublime he must undoubtedly yield to Milton. But in all that constitutes human interest in the beautiful in Art and Nature, the first object of all art, Byron as certainly surpasses him. He, too, alone, though so inferior in his walk, approaches Milton, and this is no mean praise. But if variety, extensive and eternal popularity, the aspirations and the endeavours of all genius, are the best and truest test of its degree, Byron is now, and will ever remain—why, I intend to show—our first poet. One thing is at least undisputed, except by the "fit though few" of our new and ephemeral race of bards and critics, that Byron will ever remain immeasurably above all of his age, "towering in his pride of place," the greatest artist and the greatest poet. Those who consider philosophical poetry and direct morality as the best themes for the muse, and narrow art to its miserable existence in this cold region, will not admit this. But a voice once in the living heart of the eternal people can never die, and the public have long ago, by their choice of authors, swept away all such uncongenial attempts to substitute the head for the heart. By and bye, too, more sound and comprehensive critics will rise, who will tread the paths of Jeffrey and others of the old school, and replace genius and fame upon their only true and immovable pedestal—the heart of the universal people.

Byron is the first of poets in any age or country; the first who pleases every class of readers. As in Shakspeare, the child, the beautiful and blushing-girl, the man of the most fastidious tastes, the lover, the poet, the scholar, the classic, the enthusiast of nature, the statesman, and the philosopher, the fiery soldier and the dauntless sailor, the artist, musician, painter, and sculptor, may meet in some or other of his works. From 'The Prisoner of Chillon,' the simplest, purest, and withal the most affecting of tales, to the deep thought in 'Harold,' the solemn reflections over the ruins of great empires past away never to return, the earnest aspirations after the spirit of the universe, and the descriptions of all that is sublime and beautiful in nature and art, all may meet. The whole is so transparent, so free from cloud or metaphysical puzzle, or experiment, that he who runs may read. The child may here, in one author, meet the greatest intellect; and all derive enjoyment, and suggestions for reflection, in proportion to their

cultivation and innate ardour for the beautiful. And in true simplicity—that sublime, simple pathos by which men and children are reduced to one common level—read to a sensitive child ‘The Prisoner of Chillon,’ and the best of Wordsworth’s lyrical ballads, and it will be found, that whilst the last will make little, if the slightest impression, the child’s tears will be seen to flow at the recital of the sufferings of “the poor brother,” as her tenderest sympathies are excited by thoughts of her own. “That sweet little bird that came so kindly to the poor prisoner and sung its pretty song,” will never be forgotten—

A light broke in upon my brain,
It was the carol of a bird;
It ceased, and then it came again,
The sweetest song ear ever heard:
And mine was thankful till my eyes
Had over with the glad surprise.

Here the heart has been touched and the “profoundest truth” in the world learnt—a lesson of humanity which surpasses all cold appeals to the head. An impression is made beyond all the power of the philosopher to effect; a seed has been sown, and the fruit will be perfected in season. Compassion, self-denial, and kindness to brothers and sisters is taught, and may never be forgotten. Yet such is the teacher whom indiscriminate censure can confound with the obscenities of Rochester, libel with a cold and malignant wit, that delights to expose what it should conceal—the imperfections of poor humanity, and to abuse a genius which it cannot appreciate, or it could not malign. This ribaldry, too, is that which professors of humanity seem to delight so much to circulate. Oh, this is sad, indeed; sad to speak so of a great English poet, who held even the largest human heart within his hand, and made it discourse to his eloquent music; who spake as never man before spake, of the ocean and the stars; who sowed the eternal heaven with his poetry; sang of the glory of the storm, and the lightning, and the thunder, as man never before sang; who clothed all that is most sublime of God’s creation (not its weeds) in a robe of unequalled magnificence, scarcely less beautiful than the noon-day sun, or less solemn and gorgeous than the garb of the lustrous night: and yet who can make the pure and simple heart of a little child throb at its will, and flood its guileless eyes with tears of the sweetest compassion. Oh, let us no more desecrate the memory of a power so divine. Let us preserve with a just admiration and reverence the fame of a genius so vast and so magnificent; and if we would blame, let us remember how much of sin and meanness and selfishness we ourselves must own, without his passions or his temptations, and with no part of his surpassing powers to put on the other side. How solemnly ought we to blame him who can no longer plead his own cause. We shall at least err wisely, if we err on the side of compassion, and in that pure doctrine of Christianity whose spirit is charity.

With this great and lamented poet nothing is obscure. Yet why has he been so ridiculously found fault with by the present race of bards and critics, as I shall presently show he has been? Because a thoroughly erroneous notion of the objects and essentials of poetry has been started by them, that the public may not compare their productions with the great masters, and discover what cold and barren stuff it is when brought to a true standard. They give us what they call psychological studies and matters for thought. I doubt whether the moral or physical world was ever advanced an inch by all the “profound truths,” ever uttered. I leave out of the question science and political economy, and confine my remarks to imaginative literature. Mankind and civilization are kept moving by energy, passion, feeling, and action, the practical poetry of life, the warmth of humanity. These belong to the masses, who never heard one of these profound truths from generation to generation. The people are the pulses of one great heart which moves them, and they all throb as one man upon any important question of humanity. But there is not muddiness enough in Byron to please our present bards. They therefore love him not. There is no littlebat work for the critics, and they love him not. As to intellect, there is more in a few of those glorious stanzas in the ‘Childe’ than in all their own heavy productions. The public would have encouraged their attempts, as it has done those modest enough to depend upon

their own merits; but when they seek to level Byron beneath themselves it is not to borne.

Byron and Scott are so popular because both are so thoroughly national; Shakespeare not more so. In the Crusades the spirit of our lion-hearted Richard lives again on the shores of the East. And though Byron’s most fiery scenes are there laid, what but a downright English heart moves through them in the Turban? May he not, also, of all our poets, be called the British Homer, not in invention, but in that *vividia vis animi* which poured forth stream after stream of poesy, whose force sweeps all before it? Who, since Homer possessed such impetuous vigour, that passion and energy, with the tenderest feeling, which I spoke of (*Ath.* p. 270), as being the rarest combination that could in such unpremeditated spontaneous melody pour out poems like ‘The Corsair’ in ten and the ‘Bride’ in four days. Why, if one of our ephemeral poets who speak so contemptuously of Byron were to write the worst of these tales, he would be fit the next day, raving mad with delight, and his next-of-kin would take possession of his goods under a commission *De _____*. Madness and a strait-jacket would be his for life. His feeble brain could not bear the fiery inspiration even to pass through it; the wire would be all fused by the electric spark. Now will Byron and Scott continue popular? Gibbon has observed that “style is the image of character.” This seems the best, the most comprehensive, though the briefest canon of criticism; the only truly test by which a contemporary age can probably foretell the lasting popularity of a writer of imaginative literature. Does he embody the national character, or some portion of its varieties? now Shakespeare, Scott, Byron, Dickens, and Bulwer have all seized some more, some less, of our national character. The first four the most. Byron the chief of all in this respect. But he it is who, of all our bards, seems to me the incarnation of the true national active character. Why else has his Turkish tales got by heart by almost every youth destined to get his own living, that is, who is of the poetical temperament? All he has written gives an irrepressible desire of travel, of some manly employment, of doing something; to see those scenes in Italy, Spain, Greece, and the East, which he so magnificently perpetuated. He encourages beyond any bard, that roving, restless, enterprising English spirit, which has spread itself on the wings of the wind to the uttermost parts of the earth, that cannot be still. He is therefore universal because England is. His very morbidity is English,—the morbidity of an intensely powerful nature that must be doing something; not the sickly, effeminate sentimentality of a weak one, that does nothing but stand still. The daring spirit which Byron embodies has always been English; let us hope it always will be. We have not deteriorated. We are still the finest people in the world. John Bull is the paragon of bulls, though an animal, but man is the paragon of animals, and an Englishman the paragon of men. Everything must be done to keep up the race. All literature should tend with the legislature to preserve its spirit. The manly Scott and the fiery Byron are the best infusions we have yet had of the loftiest parts of our national character; and their works are still as loved as their memories are cherished by every true Englishman. Both should have a monument side by side in Westminster Abbey, as they surely will have in time. Noble brothers in life, no little jealousies disturbed them. We must not yet turn our bold youth into milk-sops and contemplative philosophers. We have first got something great to do. Contemplative philosophers are well enough in their place, and no reasonable man complains of a few specimens, when they are kept as curiosities. But poetry of all forms is the one that should hold in its intense energy the spirit of the English people. Yet the ceaseless attempts of bards and critics, for the last dozen years, have been to leave the body without its manhood, and make all classes sit for “full half-hours,” contemplating butterflies—“rats and mice, and such small deer.” Now Byron is the poet of action, and the English are the most active people in the world. Let us hope this will be their characteristic. Why then is Byron so much loved? because he represents that energetic, determined, reckless, fiery, gloomy, morbid, and tender spirit, which belongs to the national character, to the spirited

Englishman; to such men as Lord Clive, and to those vigorous natures which conquered India, and did those daring deeds which are marvels; who have carried our name and our arms triumphant by the most wonderful achievements in every corner of the globe. Look what the Buccaneers did: there was the same undaunted English spirit badly directed. But we want to keep it alive. Nothing is of greater moment than to preserve this national spirit, and he deserves a public monument who best perpetuates it. Leave our statesmen to direct and employ it. I maintain then that Byron of all our poets has best, if not alone, caught and preserved this English spirit, in his glorious verse, which is spreading with unexampled rapidity, by the sixpenny editions, to every class. We must no more look for the purest morality or idealized characters, worked out as models, in such rapid poetry, than expect that the daring animal spirits that storm towns will not run into excesses. What is so wonderful is, that with such impetuosity, such reckless dash, there is, after all, so little objectionable matter where it is most displayed, and amidst such various and innumerable triumphs as Byron has achieved. Examine Achilles and Ajax critically, and they are mere animals, ferocious tigers whose sole delight is glory through slaughter; their love, without the slightest pretence to sentiment, brutal and sensual; its objects slaves, handed from one to another. But why examine Genius by the head? Why not give up the heart to its inspiration, and enjoy it? This alone will clothe the skeleton to which criticism would reduce it. Man is a fighting animal from his birth. Babies fight their mothers, and boys their fathers, brothers, and sisters. We cannot check this innate propensity; and, as man advances in civilization, science enables him to invent machines for the destruction of his species, a thousand-fold more destructive than the claws nature has denied him. Why it should be so is beyond our miserably finite faculties to discover, and therefore faith is wisely given to save us from impiety. From the first murder to the shocking atrocities in China, we have not advanced a step in this respect; and it seems destined that we must civilize by the sword in the first instance. Whilst then it is so, why should we depress the noblest genius; he, whose spirit stirs the chivalrous and brave to protect our shores? Here the public meet Campbell, whose glorious lyrics will outlive, as they deserve, all his other poems. These are what the English nation like, and one of which is worth heaps of ballads, cruelly misnamed lyrical, for they have nothing whatever of the sweetness, elegance, beauty, delicacy, harmony, exquisite taste, and lyric spirit, which all true discernment sees in lyric poetry. What would poetry come to if the *public* received these things as *lyric*! Why then do “the fit though few” put these atrocities on “the pensive muse,” and then abuse our taste and tell us we want coarse excitement. We are what we are—the English people; we like our own national drink of “Old October,” and plenty of it, better than skim milk, meted out in driblets. We are not a homeopathic nation. Nor are we a hydro-pathic nation. We are that great English nation whose stout hearts have beaten the world on land and sea, from Crecy to Waterloo; who have conquered, and will possess, all India, and China, and leave the spirit of the race ruling over every island of the main. Fancy an order from the Horse Guards, for a battalion of these sonneteers and lyrists, to lead on our soldiers and inspire them with martial ardour as did the bards of old!

Can any of your readers connected with literature tell One of the Public (who, not knowing a single author, bookseller, or even literary man, has no other means of obtaining information) what strange propensity it is that induces “the fit though few” to traduce the genius of the dead, whom the public have pronounced immortal? For a dozen years silly attempts have been going on to displace Byron from his lofty pedestal. I have read, within the last two days, the most astounding criticism on this great poet, by one of the “spirits of the age,” that was ever penned. Though published ten years ago, it was never heard of here until the commendations of the said criticism by other “spirits of the age.” And what do these spirits of the age say of England’s greatest poet? That “he was in knowledge merely a man of Belles Lettres; . . . a man of idleness and light reading, . . . who acquired popularity by

the exercise of a single talent; . . . that his contracting self-love confined the field of his operations within narrow limits; . . . that he had no enlargement of mind." What, the public would ask, are we to expect from the poetry of the day, when such trash as this can not only be published by bards, but ten years afterwards be commended by other bards, presuming to call themselves "the spirits of the age" of such nation as Great Britain, ruling over some hundreds of millions of people? When a great and sound-hearted public have conferred an immortality upon an author, it is presumptuous blockheads only that presume to dispute its judgment. The public have *never* been long in error, and never can be, in their estimate of literary art. What have become of the select few who tried the same thing against Pope? They are now only known by the inscription of their names on the monument of their folly. Pope is quoted as much as ever, and his detractors are laughed at for their trouble. There was no need for Byron's mighty hand to sweep away the cobwebs from the cage of the Little Twickenham Nightingale. His notes come out as clear and melodic as ever, and he still remains exactly where he was. But, as such criticism as this wholesale invective against Byron's various and unequalled genius should not be passed unnoticed—and I should be ashamed to raise my own feeble voice in his defence—permit me to remark, that this "man merely of Belles Lettres" was, in an era of unparalleled intellect and genius, the observed of all observers: that he received the immediate homage of the most gifted and differing genius of his age—the manly and chivalrous Scott; the pure-minded and classical Shelley, and the many-sided Goethe—of Campbell, Moore, and Rogers, Canning and Peel; that he was acknowledged by these, and by the first critics of his time, and still is by these true judges of art, to be the first poet of his period; that he who has "acquired popularity by a single talent" is now more read than all the British poets put together, except Shakespeare; and that this man of "idleness and light reading," amidst revolutions of all sorts, the care of his property, public and domestic contentions, and bad health, left, at thirty-six, the most surprising monument of industry, in mere quantity (poems, letters, and journals), ever left by bard at that early age—to say nothing of the unapproachable quality of the whole. And what letters! Shelley, too, of all men—the pure and gentle Shelley, who lives so deeply in our hearts—had perhaps the best opportunity of forming an opinion of this "single-talent" man. He lived near him, and the extent of his own classical attainments (the best Greek translator of his day), and the variety of his learning, entitle him to be considered at least as good a judge as the aforesaid spirits of our age. Now, as I hope it is the pleasure of the conductors of the literary press, as it is their duty, to defend the memory of the departed genius of their country, let the living voice of the true-minded and sincere Shelley speak to our judgment. Byron's accusers have been heard: let his defenders. An Englishman, of all people, loves fair play: it is the noblest part of his national character. Long years the public have never said a word. Contenting themselves with buying three-guinea editions of "Harold" (where the spirit of the immortal Childe is enshrined in the most beautiful monument genius and art could erect), and calling for six-penny editions of his works, they have put up quietly enough with this insult to their country's great poet. But A. (see *ante*, p. 339) has nobly said, "THE FAME OF LORD BYRON IS PUBLIC PROPERTY." We feel that it is. Speak, then, in defence of thy only superior of thy time—of this "man of idleness and light reading." "He is," observes Shelley, "a person of the most consummate genius, and capable, if he would direct his energies to such an end, of becoming the redeemer of his country. He derives, from a comparison of his own *extraordinary* mind with the dwarfish intellects that surround him, an intense apprehension of the nothingness of human life. His passions and his powers are incomparably greater than those of other men; yet, in social life, no human being can be more gentle, patient, and unassuming. He is cheerful, frank, and witty. His more serious conversation is a sort of intoxication: men are held by it as by a spell." And what does Shelley say in his letters, with that noble generosity true genius always pays to genius? "Lord Byron is the only poet

worth contending against; but I have lived too near the sun to show my little light: I write nothing now." Great bards are ever just to each other. Sure of their own immortality, they seek not to build up a reputation by impeaching the style and genius of all other bards. It is, I feel, almost an insult to the public to notice the criticism of the age-spirits on *our* great poet. His power is as unmistakeable as the sun at noon-day; his beauties as the heavens; his grandeur and magnificence as the stars of the night. Manfully did Scott say, that "Byron had hit the mark where he could not even aim his arrows." Yet THIS is the poet of whom the honourable members of the Lumber Troop of authors have been for ten years past trying to dethrone.

The time will surely come—for noble is the English character in the long run—when Byron will have paid to his memory, his genius, and his sufferings that affectionate homage which the genius and sufferings of Dante and Tasso receive from their countrymen, and the world. What a lesson in charity may not Christian England learn from more Catholic France, Italy, and Protestant Germany! They know how to venerate

The dead but sceptered sovereigns, who still rule
Our spirits from their urns.

We do not. The literary press and the government have yet to learn this noble lesson. The many-minded people are the best keepers of the fame of their great men, and would wish to meet, in some solemn edifice for solemn thought, the likenesses of those whose spirit rules them. No statue would teach so moral, so deep a lesson as that of our great poet. Unsurpassed genius, fame beyond man's desire, wealth, rank, beauty—everything to fill his gorgeous cup to overflowing with mortal happiness. Yet, it was not his. Nothing from the pulpit could teach like this the vanity of human wishes: nothing be so suggestive of that mournful reflection which leads to virtue.

There is the moral of all human tales.

A perpetual homily in itself. And yet we deny him place in Westminster Abbey! Is not his spirit with us? Does it not live in the hearts of tens of thousands? Is it not of the nation? of the very essence of all that is brave and bold, manly and enthusiastic? of the British people? of that dauntless, unconquerable, Promethean spirit, which defied the wide world in arms, preserved inviolate our shore, our beauty from pollution, our freedom and our faith intact? Is he not the only bard we have where this determined spirit is to be found? Genius and the grave should level all distinctions of sects; great sufferings should atone for great errors; the tomb that closes on his griefs, should sepulchre his foes. All should be hushed. We speak of a great spirit that is gone: where? Death has set his seal upon reply. It is too awful for ribald wit or censure; no voice but the voice of prayer should be heard; our common humanity whispers it; our religion teaches it. The grave is a solemn thought; and did he not greatly suffer? Had he no wrongs? no injuries to avenge? Did he avenge them? Did he not—the outcast—forgive? Shall the Paria instruct us in *charity*? Hear what he teaches—"Forgiveness."

No more outrage on the memory of genius, who saw all that life holds dear torn from him; the tenderest feelings of a father outraged, never to see his child again in this life. And did he not love his country? Was he not proud of it? Did he not seek to return to it through Greece? Did he not ever yearn after it? Can we hear unmoved his voice from the grave? The proud Englishman would not ask our sympathies living: let us give them dead. It is never too late. No true, sincere, humble-minded Christian can wish to leave so great a name

From out the Temple where the dead

Are honoured by the nations.

Such intolerance is not to be found in their beautiful religion; in a faith so heavenly in its charity. It is the Pharisee, who censures the living and the dead, who thanks God he is not as other men are. Now Byron was ever most self-accusing, magnifying his fault; and though he would not humble himself to man, may he not have done so to his Maker, and have prayed—"God be merciful to me a sinner?"

His disembodied spirit has, beyond doubt, chosen for its sanctuary "The inviolate Island of the sage and free," and whilst such a noble unconquerable

spirit lives in our hearts, so will this happy land remain. Let a great nation, so justly proud of its freedom, honour Freedom's noblest champion, her proudest, loftiest Childe, one who died so early and unhappy. Let us at length do justice to his memory

Who gave for Liberty his latest breath,

And twined this pure remembrance with his wreath.

BETA.

P.S.—Since writing the above, I have read Sigma's answer (p. 381) to my last, at p. 357. "One of the Public" would not have been so uncandid towards him as he has been to me. We never take a single hasty expression, even if objectionable, on which to found a long tirade. But I did nowhere say, as Sigma has quoted, "The great object of Poetry is to excite the passions." I know it is not. I drew the distinction between philosophical poetry and that of the great masters; and when I spoke of exciting, I accompanied it with "directing" the passions. I will show that Sigma has entirely mistaken me, and the taste of the great reading public. Those in the habit of reading "Shakspeare, Milton particularly, Byron, Scott, and Dickens," as I quoted, cannot possibly have the vulgar taste and desire for coarse excitement, he seems to desire to put upon us. I will meet him upon the beauties of Shelley, Keats, and Tennyson, as long as it pleases him, because I feel them, and he cannot enjoy them more than myself; but I will not debase Taste or Art by admitting philosophical poetry to the position sought for it.

[Many other letters on this topic have been received; one from Theta we shall insert at an early opportunity: with that, however, the controversy must close.]

THE LATE WILLIAM BECKFORD, ESQ.

HAVING perceived that, in the *Athenæum* of last week, you gave a notice of the death, and a short sketch of the general characteristics of the life of this eccentric man of letters and munificent patron of the arts; and as any information, however scanty, which can add to the amount of knowledge already possessed respecting his character, or property, must be acceptable; I trust that the subjoined memoranda of a favoured depository in which he piled his treasures, a visit to which was highly coveted, and difficult to secure, will perhaps prove interesting.

It is not generally known, except by persons living in the neighbourhood of Bath, that upon the hill of Lansdown, near that city, the late Mr. Beckford, at an early period of his residence there, erected a lofty tower, in the apartments of which were placed many of his choicest paintings and articles of virtu. Asiatic in its style, with gilded lattices and blinds or curtains of crimson cloth, its striped ceilings, its minaret, and other accessories, conveyed the idea that the being who designed the place and endeavoured to carry out the plan, was deeply imbued with the spirit of that lonely grandeur and strict solitariness which obtains through all countries and among all the people of the East. The building was surrounded by a high wall, and entrance afforded to the garden in which the tower stood, by a door of small dimensions. The garden itself, was Eastern in its character. Though comparatively circumscribed in its size, nevertheless were to be found within it, solitary walks and deep retiring shades, such as could be supposed Vathek, the mournful and the magnificent, loved, and from the bowers of which might be expected would suddenly fall upon the ear, sounds of the cymbal and the dulcimer. The building contained several apartments crowded with the finest paintings. At the time I made my inspection the walls were crowded with the choicest productions of the easel. The memory falls back upon ineffaceable impressions of Old Franck, Breughel, Cuyp, Titian, (a Holy Family) Hondekoeter, Polemberg, and a host of other painters whose works have immortalized Art. Ornaments of the most exquisite gold filigree, carvings in ivory and wood, Raphael-esque china, goblets formed of gems, others fashioned by the miraculous hands of Benvenuto Cellini, filled the many cabinets and *recherché* receptacles created for such things. The doors of the rooms were of finely polished wood—the windows of single sweeps of plate glass—the cornices of gilded silver; every part, both within and without, bespeaking the wealth, the magnificence, and the taste of him who had built this temple in dedication to grandeur, solitariness, and the arts.

The residence of Mr. Beckford was on the western

wing of Lansdown Crescent, an imposing collection of houses, lying considerably below the spot on which the tower was built, though on the same hill, and from his house,—indeed a palace!—he could soon reach the tower. Here he often came without attendant, entered the gloomy pillar, and became wrapped in his own meditations—thoughts whether like those that engaged the minds of the beings with which he peopled the Hall of Eblis in his marvellous *Vathek*, when gazing upon the Pre-Adamic Sultans, and the gathered riches of a world gone by, or more akin with modern and less magnificent times, is now, with his frail body, alike hidden from us.

While penning these feeble recollections of this singular place and its strange owner, the interior and exterior of the Tower more vividly present themselves to my imagination. An apartment stood within the walls called the Chapel. It was a narrow place, the sides hung with pictures entirely of devotional subjects. These were all impressive, but the object which struck most strongly on the senses, was a statue of a monk holding the infant Jesus in his arms. The rapt, soul-satisfied smile with which the countenance of the figure regarded the heavenly child was really subduing. The name of the sculptor was unknown to us, but his work was a miracle. On the pedestal stood the inscription "Dominus Illuminatio Mea." From this chapel the visitor passed into a narrow room which might be termed the Library, for it was filled with books. This was a place where a man might have entered, built up the doorway by which he gained his admission, and died in study. The light subdued, the air softly blowing through the chamber, the deep silence, induced profound attention. And then arose the smell of books—the fine perfume exuding from vellum, ruskin, and even from the insides of choice tomes, furthered the invitation to self-sacrifice. Not all the odorous gums and spices heaped by Sardanapalus on his funeral pyre, could have equalled this.

I recollect these very feelings coming potently upon me when I stood within this apartment. It was with regret I left it and mounted to the summit of the Tower. Hero what an almost boundless prospect awaited me: the lonely arid down spreading immediately beneath—far on the right, the stone pillar erected to mark the spot where Fulke Greville fell and died—beyond, the fruitful valleys of Weston, Tewton, Keynsham, onwards to Bristol;—and far, far off, beyond hill and vale, and wide-spreading down, and multitudinous acres of arable and wood, fading in dim distance rose the tower of Fonthill!—fit termination to the view.

It has been said, that Beckford's Tower had been erected by its owner, for the purpose of occasionally resting his eyes upon the summit of the magnificent palace on which he had poured his wealth and all the resources of his mind—that he never ceased to regret its departure from his hands, that this sorrow amounted sometimes to despondency—and that to this tower he came to feed his melancholy mind, and gaze upon that which had gone into the possession of strangers, and from him for ever.

The truth of this is not ascertained—but the tale is not improbable, and the sentiment is fit, with such a man.

I. W.

OUR WEEKLY GOSSIP.

In our brief obituary notice of the late Mr. Beckford, we alluded to his father, Alderman Beckford, as a merchant; on this subject we have received the following letter:—

Will you allow me to correct an error in your memoir of the late Mr. Beckford. His father, the alderman, was not a *merchant*, his connexion with the City was entirely political. He was the eldest son of Peter Beckford, accounted the richest subject in Europe, who left also extensive estates to his younger children, viz. Julius, grandfather of the late Lord Rivers, Francis, whose descendants now alone retain the name; Elizabeth Countess of Effingham, and Ann, the mother of Lord Seaford. Peter Beckford was the son of a successful soldier, Col. Beckford, Governor of Jamaica, who was nephew to Sir Thomas Beckford, of Ashstead, in Surrey. The family had originally large estates in Gloucestershire, &c., but Sir William Beckford died fighting for King Richard on Bosworth Field, and the fortunes of the family fell with him. And you will not be sorry to hear, that the works published by Mr. Beckford did not "exhaust his productive powers." Masses of manuscripts remain which may be given to the public, and which I do not think you will find unworthy the advantage of your notice.

Mr. Nixon's statue of John Carpenter, the founder of the City of London School, was on Monday placed

upon its pedestal in the first landing of the great staircase opposite the south entrance to the school; on which occasion the Rev. Dr. Mortimer, the head master, read an appropriate inscription, containing a compendious history of the founder, according to a document recently discovered amongst the ancient records of the corporation.

At the annual dinner of the Artists' Benevolent Fund, Lord Palmerston in the chair, about 100 gentlemen were present; among them, Sir A. L. Hay, M.P., Sir J. Easthope, M.P., Hon. C. Colborne, Mr. H. T. Hope, M.P., Mr. C. Dickens, Sir W. C. Ross, R.A., Mr. R. H. Solly, Mr. J. P. Knight, Mr. C. Stanfield, and Mr. O. Roberts. The subscriptions amounted to 550*l.*, including Her Majesty's 100 and Prince Albert's 50 guineas.

Critics are more cautious than is generally supposed. We did not insert our correspondent's letter respecting *The Etch'd Thoughts*, until we had satisfied ourselves of its general accuracy. The Club forthwith claimed permission to reply: whether they will have benefited their cause by discussion, the reader will be best able to decide, when he shall have read the subjoined.

Leeds, May 16, 1844.

The Etching Club are amusing people:—in my former letter I state of the Etch'd Thoughts, "that the greater part of (three-fourths I should say) is not new, but had been issued by the Club some years since." They presume to call this assertion "unjustifiable," and in the same paragraph admit that forty-four of the plates (*there are only sixty in the Etch'd Thoughts!*) did so appear. I complain of having "such a fraction" (!) of the old work as forty-four plates out of sixty; I complain of the book being advertised as a "new work by the Etching Club;" and I leave it to you and the public to determine whether my statements, or the proceedings of the Club, are "unjustifiable." The original work (issued in numbers) contains about eighty plates. (Perhaps we may hope for the republication of the remaining thirty-six at some future period, as another new work.) There may have been no more than seven copies printed; I have only to say I know of four in Leeds alone, and I also know that three persons who bought the Etch'd Thoughts as a "new work" would not have done so had they had any idea that it was their old friend in a new dress. I am, &c.

AN OLD SUBSCRIBER.

Just five years ago, in a review of Flaxman's Lectures on Sculpture, the *Athenæum* threw out a gentle philippic against his ungrateful country, while alluding to her Grand Metropolitan Necropolis.—"All her chantries and chapels (we said) choked up with tombs of inflated oligarchs and dozing diocesans, cannot furnish space for the small image of a sculptor who often conferred upon these depositories their chief adornment. No! nor even did they furnish such a space, would all England, we are persuaded, club for such a purpose the weight of her cobwebs in golden pounds." (*Athen.* No. 585.) Our assertion, it would seem, is now about to be tested: may the result prove us, we fervently pray, false prophets—may our philippic itself contribute its mite to prove us so, by giving that osceint Virtue, national gratitude, a *fillip* which will peradventure awaken her! We almost flatter ourselves we did Demosthenize with some little effect, as it appears certain Noblemen and Gentlemen have formed themselves into an indignant Committee, and reiterate aloud what we only murmured in a dove-like tone of the tenderest complaint. "It has long been a subject of general regret, and national reproach," thus breaks forth their programme, "that in this country so little has yet been done to testify a nation's gratitude to the great Masters in British Art. The persevering exertions of private individuals erected a monument in St. Paul's to the memory of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and the admiration of friends and countrymen a statue in the National Gallery to the memory of Sir David Wilkie. But the history of British gratitude to British Art begins and ends with these two statues. While public memorials to our warriors and statesmen are of common occurrence, Sir Christopher Wren has only a slab, Hogarth is without a bust, and Flaxman without a statue." Sir Christopher has *more* than a slab—a whole bust in Turkey-egg marble at Oxford—but this is immaterial: he and Flaxman deserve statues to their memory, because they both raised monuments to the glory of their mother-land. They deserve them somewhat better than George the First, who did nothing to promote Art, and George the Fourth who did much to degrade it, though we grant they do not require them like these royal nobodies, as preservatives against being forgotten. Let us add that the names of Buceleuch, Lansdowne, Northampton, Rogers, Eastlake, Calcott,

&c. among the Committee, ensure the respectability of the project. Mr. M. L. Watson, sculptor of an allegorical frontispiece on the Hall of Commerce, has undertaken to execute a full-sized portrait-statue of Flaxman for £1,200, including copies from two of Flaxman's finest bas-reliefs as pedestal ornaments. The model, we observe, is already made, and viewable at Mr. Watson's studio: but we have not yet seen it, because all to which we would now pledge ourselves is approval of the project itself.

We are glad to learn (for we were not able to be present) that Mr. Charles Kemble's *Shakspearian Readings*, on Monday, the 13th, were productive of the refined gratification that was expected. He began with "Cymbeline," a play, perhaps, not the most favourable, for obvious reasons, to the experiment; but to every passage of poetry or feeling, Mr. Kemble, we understand, gave exquisite effect. Occasionally he rose into energy. The audience, though select, was numerous.

If the specimens of "ornamental metal work" at St. James's Bazaar were not altogether satisfactory, we have now got a superlatively tasty sample in the fences, or *garde-fou*, put in between the columns of the portico of the National Gallery; our old familiar friends, the wooden poles, being fairly worn out in the service. We know not to whose inventive talent we are indebted for this notable piece of ornamental work. The taste which suggested it may have been *asinine*, but the things themselves are rather of *equine* character, bearing a decided resemblance to the clothes-horse, bating their colour, which is green. It might have been supposed that nothing less than bronze would have been employed on such an occasion; at any rate, that the metal would have had a coating of bronze, instead of which, in humble imitation of Mrs. Jarley's Caravan, it has a jacket of flaring green paint; and this elegance and refined taste in a building devoted to the Fine Arts, and the *habitat* of a Royal Academy!

A trial by the Philharmonic orchestra took place on Wednesday morning of the Symphony by Schubert, which we have so long pressed on the notice of the Society, and of a work by the young Danish composer, M. Gade. Till it be decided whether either or both come to public hearing, it would be premature to offer comments. From such an essay, too, it is of course impossible to gather more than the mere outlines of the composition. We cannot, however, but mention a minuet of rare delicacy and originality in the second symphony, as one of those movements about which there can be no mistake, however numerous be the faults of the band. Besides these, a MS. overture, by Dr. Mendelssohn Bartholdy, was played through, of which we shall have an opportunity of speaking at some coming concert.

The original manuscripts of the Correspondence of Burns and Clarinda (*Athen.* No. 842) were sold on Friday, May 10th, by Messrs. Tait, at Edinburgh. The company, as a correspondent informs us, was numerous, and the competition spirited. There being no bidding at the upset price (25*l.*) the letters were sold separately, and realized 38*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* Letter No. 64 of the recent publication, containing the "Lament of Queen Mary," brought 5*l.* 5*s.*; No. 65, which had the Poet's initials, 1*l.* 10*s.*; No. 66, containing the beautiful song, "A fond kiss," 1*l.* 1*s.* Mr. Watson, bookseller, Princes Street, Edinburgh, was the principal purchaser.

The Paris papers report the death, at the age of sixty-nine, of M. Burnouf, the father of M. Eugène Burnouf, the eminent orientalist, himself distinguished for his labours on the classical languages. His Greek grammar has gone through thirty editions, and been for many years the vehicle of instruction in all the colleges of France. M. Burnouf was a member of the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres.

The Annual General Meeting of the five Academies composing the Institute of France was held on the 2nd inst., under the presidency of M. Charles Dupin; the most conspicuous features of its proceedings being the chairman's own tribute to the illustrious members whom death has removed from the ranks of those several bodies during the past twelve months—a discourse by M. Lenormant, "On Painted Vases," and a paper read by M. Rémusat, called by him "A Fragment of the Philosophical History of French Literature," and which is spoken of in terms of extraordinary commendation.

From Rome, we learn that the spacious galleries of the Barberini Palace, in which the artist and the public have so long had access to the numerous collection of works of art assembled there by Thorwaldsen, are now closed, and put under the seal of the illustrious sculptor's testamentary executors, preparatory to the removal of the works themselves to the Museum founded by him at Copenhagen. Previously to their transportation, in conformity with a clause in Thorwaldsen's will, plaster casts are to be taken of all the works of sculpture which the collection contains, for presentation to the Kings of Wurtemburg and Bavaria, in acknowledgment of the friendship with which those sovereigns honoured the great artist through life.

ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS, TRAFALGAR SQUARE. THE EXHIBITION OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY IS NOW OPEN. Admission (from Eight o'clock till Seven 1s.; Catalogue 6d.) HENRY HOWARD, H.A. S.^EC.

THE TENTH ANNUAL EXHIBITION of the NEW SOCIETY OF PAINTERS in WATER COLOURS is NOW OPEN at their Gallery, FIFTY-THREE, PAUL MALL, next the British Institution, from 9 o'clock till Dusk. Admission 1s.; Catalogue 6d.

JAMES FAHEY, Secretary.

GREAT ATTRACTION—DIORAMA, REGENT'S PARK, JUST OPENED, with a NEW EXHIBITION, representing the Interior of the Abbey Church of St. Ouen, at Rouen; and an Exterior View of the Cathedral of Notre Dame at Paris. Both Pictures are painted by M. Renoux, and exhibit various novel effects of light and shade—Open from Ten till Six.

THE MAGNIFICENT TAPESTRIES from the Designs of RAFFAELLO Sanzio, presented by Pope Leo X. to Henry VIII., will remain ON VIEW, at No. 213, Piccadilly, for a short time. Admission One Shilling.

MUSIC OF FRANCE.

Without extra Charge to the Public, at the ROYAL POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTION.—The Directors have engaged Mr. C. H. HORN to deliver a SERIES of LECTURES on the MUSIC of GERMANY, FRANCE, &c. &c. The MUSIC OF FRANCE commences on the 20th inst., at Eight o'clock in the Evening, and will be continued during the week on Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday, at Three o'clock, with VOCAL AND INSTRUMENTAL ILLUSTRATIONS. All the LECTURES AND EXHIBITIONS, including LONGBOTTON'S PHYSICO-SCOPE and OPAQUE MICROSCOPE, NEW DISSOLVING VIEWS, ARMSTRONG'S HYDRO-ELECTRIC MACHINE, &c. &c.—Admission 1s.; Schools, Half-price.

SCIENTIFIC AND LITERARY

GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY.—May 13.—R. I. Murchison, Esq. President, in the chair. The minutes being read, the President announced that H.R.H. Prince Albert had graciously condescended to fill the office of Vice Patron of the Society, which had become vacant by the death of the Duke of Sussex. Four new members were elected, after which the Secretary read a paper by Dr. Beke, being the details of that traveller's route from Yaush to Massouah, in Abyssinia: the road taken was an entirely new one, and had never before been mapped; the country varies considerably in its aspect and fertility; but the nature of the paper, which was an itinerary, does not admit of an abridgment.

INSTITUTE OF BRITISH ARCHITECTS.—April 29.—Mr. C. H. Smith on the Magnesian limestones.—This paper was a continuation of those formerly read treating on the sandstones and oolites: on the present occasion Mr. Smith proceeded with the subject by describing the great beds of magnesian limestone, which lie, with little intervals, from Nottingham and Tynemouth, and more especially those between Mansfield to Knaresborough, an extent of about seventy miles. In this district stone is found combining the carbonate of lime and magnesia from the lowest amount of the latter to proportions comprising pure dolomite—of course they vary greatly, both in appearance and quality, and that even in cases when the substances are, chemically speaking, the same;—among the best of these stones, as building materials, are the Bolsover, Roche Abbey, Barnham Moor, and Huddlestane. The first-named has been tested in the Norman Church at Southwell, which remains in a state of high preservation; but much, as Mr. Smith particularly insisted upon, depends upon the situation of the beds from which the stone is raised: the remains of Roche Abbey, for example, and the church at Tukhill, both built with the stone which Sir C. Wren distinguished as second only to Portland, are in a perfect state, with all the sharpness of the mouldings preserved, whereas buildings in the neighbourhood erected with the same material during the present century, but without due regard to the choice of the beds, are already in a state of decay; so also with regard to the Barnham Moor stone, many Roman remains at York are in a far better condition than the works of the middle ages in that

city, not excepting the cathedral, and others at Hull, Beverley, and Tadcaster, built with the same stone. The Cadby stone is found to decompose rapidly; a specimen used in London, perished in about fourteen years, and yet this stone is found within a short distance of Conisborough Castle, which was built with similar stone from an adjoining hill, and remains the most perfect specimen of masonry of its age existing in this climate. The characteristics of durable magnesian limestone are its compactness and high crystallization; those which appear earthy, and powdery, and leave white on the fingers, on being handled, are not to be trusted. The Anston quarries, which supply the stone for the Parliament Houses, were left to be the subject of a final communication.

May 6.—At the annual general meeting held this day, Earl De Grey was re-elected President—Vice Presidents, Messrs. Papworth, Kendall, and G. Smith. Honorary Secretaries, A. Paynter and G. Bailey.—Honorary Secretary for Foreign Correspondence, T. L. Donaldson.

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY.—April.—Francis Baily, Esq., President, in the chair. Lieut.-Colonel J. H. Umfrey was elected Fellow. M. Emile Plantamour, Director of the Observatory at Geneva, and Professor of Astronomy in the Academy at Geneva, was elected an Associate.

The following communications were read:—

'Additional Observations of Faye's Comet, made at the Observatory of Trinity College, Dublin,' by Mr. C. Thompson, accompanied by an explanation of the method of observation and reduction.

'Meridian Observations of the Moon, and Moon-culminating Stars, made at Hamburg during the years 1838 and 1839,' by C. Rumker, Esq.

'Elements of the Comet of Mauvais,' by M. Göte.

'Observations of the Comet of Encke, made at the Royal Observatory of the Cape of Good Hope in May 1842,' communicated by Thomas Maclear, Esq.

'An Account of the Erection of the Herschel Obelisk at the Cape of Good Hope, accompanied by the Report of Colonel Lewis, and a Plan of the same,' by Thomas Maclear, Esq. The following is an abstract. Sir John Herschel, during his residence at the Cape, was President of the South African Literary and Scientific Institution. When he was about to leave the colony, the members expressed a desire to present him with some token of remembrance; and, at a full meeting, a few days before his departure, a gold medal was presented, with the impress of the institution on one side and a suitable inscription on the reverse. The feelings excited on that interesting occasion strongly evinced how much the members regretted the loss of their president and their admiration of one whose talents place him so far above ordinary men, and whose private life was a pattern of every domestic virtue. The sum subscribed having exceeded the expense of the medal, another subscription-list was opened with the intention of raising a fund for the purpose of placing a substantial structure on the site of the 20-feet reflector in the garden of Sir John's late residence at Feldhausen. The proposal was accordingly laid before Sir George Napier, who entered warmly into the project, and placed his name at the head of the list annexed to a handsome subscription. In the course of a few days the sum subscribed amounted to 190L. At a general meeting, held on the 28th of November 1838, the erection of the obelisk was finally determined on; and a committee was appointed to carry its erection into effect.

A fruitless attempt to procure a granite column at the Cape, of proper workmanship and within the resources of the Committee, led to the adoption of a suggestion that one of Craigleath stone, from the quarry near Edinburgh, might be obtained without difficulty and of superior finish. A resolution was accordingly passed by the Committee, which, together with a plan of the proposed obelisk, was forwarded to Professors Forbes and Henderson, of Edinburgh, with a request that those gentlemen would kindly undertake the necessary superintendence of the work; a request to which they acceded with alacrity; and the obelisk, in packing cases, arrived in Table Bay in the month of August 1841, where it was safely landed under the guidance of Colonel Lewis.

The following is the report of Colonel Lewis on the erection:—"In excavating the foundation, which

was of black sand, it was found necessary to go down 4 feet 10 inches to arrive at the iron-stone gravelly bed, the substratum of the country about Feldhausen. The masonry foundation was formed of concrete, built up in courses of 12 or 14 inches, and composed of iron-stone, gravel, and lime-mortar, well grouted together. On this masonry bed a granite platform 9 feet 6 inches square was laid, and the small column fixed by Sir John Herschel on the site of the 20-feet reflector. This mark was removed for a few days, in order to bring the masonry foundation to a proper height, but the mark was relaid with mathematical correctness by Lieut. Laffau, Royal Engineers. Previously, however, to relaying the Herschel mark, the suggestion of the Committee of Construction was adopted of placing under it several silver and copper coins, a few inscription medals, and medals of the South African Institution, struck in silver for the occasion; and on the obverse were engraved some notices, statistical and geographical, of the colony; the discoveries of Capt. Ross in the South Polar Regions in 1841; and the operation of remeasuring the arc of the meridian in 1842. These subjects were beautifully executed by Mr. Piazza Smyth, assistant-astronomer, and hermetically sealed in glass bottles. Also there were deposited a map of the colony and engravings of nebulae observed at Slough from 1825 to 1833, by Sir John Herschel, and a plan of Mr. Maclear's triangulation connecting the site Feldhausen with the Royal Observatory and the site of La Caillie's observatory, in Strand Street, Cape Town. The bottle was carefully fixed in a block of teak-wood, scooped out on purpose. When the granite platform was brought to its level, and the Herschel mark refixed and filled in with cement, it was necessary to erect heavy shears of large spars, to place the stones of the obelisk, composed of large blocks of Craigleath stone, some weighing two tons. This was accomplished with some trouble and expense, and the base of the obelisk was laid with the faces corresponding with the four cardinal points. The whole was completed on the 15th of February 1842, in presence of some of the Committee and several of the subscribers and friends of Sir John Herschel, who attended on the occasion of placing the top stone of the obelisk. The obelisk has the base 6 feet square by 6 feet in height, and the pyramidal part stands 12 feet above the base. On the east face is an opening showing the Herschel mark, designating the site of the 20-feet reflector. The opening will be closed with a bronze plate, containing the inscription of the purpose for which the obelisk is erected."

"On Loud Beats of Clocks used in Observatories," by J. S. Eiffe, Esq. This paper gives an explanation of a simple and easily applied method of obtaining very loud beats for the astronomical clock. The mode of constructing the apparatus is as follows:—Two pieces of thin brass are placed at the sides of the frame-work of the clock, in length the same as the space between the pillars; in width, about two inches or more at pleasure; these pieces of brass are placed horizontally, at about the same altitude from the base as the axis of the escape-wheel pinion, and at the right angles to it, or nearly so. They should be made of such a size as would insure a sound, distinct, sharp, and short. The little tables can be made to any size. Upon these tables or plates two hammers play, supported by arbors at the same elevation as all the others. The pivots should be made small for easy motion. The hammers are intended to beat upon the middle of each brass table simultaneously with the drop proper of the escape wheel: through the agency of the pendulum, they are lifted alternately by the heels of the anchors of the pallets, assisted by a passing spring similar to that used in the chronometer escapement. It has just been observed, that the arbors which support those little hammers are placed at the same elevation from the base of the brass frame-work of the clock as the escape-wheel arbor, but at the sides, and as near to the edge as possible. About the centre, or midway between them, are affixed brass collets, about $\frac{1}{2}$ of an inch in thickness, and $\frac{1}{2}$ of an inch in diameter. Two slender pieces of spring are secured to the collets by screws passing through square holes formed longitudinally, to secure power of adjustment for bringing the arms into proper contact with the anchor of the pallets. The little hammers beat upon the plates or tables at one end, and at the other the lift-

ing action takes place, assisted by the passing spring. The strokes upon these brass tables have a peculiar sharpness of tone, which can be accounted for in some measure, when it is considered that they are very different from the sounds produced by the teeth of the wheel itself; in the dead-beat escapement the teeth have a sliding motion in the moment of drop, but not impulse, for it is well known that that is subsequent to the sound. By such application it is proposed to obtain sound, so loud as to be distinct in the stormiest night; but as the constant connexion of such apparatus would neither be desirable as concerns the action of the clock, nor pleasant to the ear as a companion, a mode has been introduced of readily detaching it altogether. By a certain method, which shall be explained, the hammers are raised from the tables at one end, and the arms at the other entirely disengaged from the anchor at the pallets, without inconvenience or disturbing action to the clock itself. The apparatus within is immediately, and at pleasure, acted upon through the agency of a bolt, which is placed vertically, immediately over the 60 minutes, or about two inches back, sufficiently long to reach a spring of hard brass, which is about half an inch wide, and which passes transversely over the frame-work of the clock, and is fixed securely to the backboard of the clock-case. Now the mode in which the spring unites its action with the rest of the apparatus is by slight cross-bars, which extend to the extremities of the sides of the frame, so that the ends are immediately over the hammers, with which they are connected by silk threads. Therefore, by pressing down the bolt before named, the hammers are allowed to fall into action, and do their duty simultaneously with the teeth of the wheel upon the pallets. While the little hammers are in action, the teeth of the wheel are no longer heard.

The Astronomer Royal declares by letter, that he has examined the plan, and is enabled to say that it answers completely for its proposed purpose; and that it appears likely to be very useful. Moreover, that the rate of the clock will not necessarily be disturbed during the time of its connexion—though that will greatly depend on certain conditions.

LINNEAN SOCIETY.—April 16.—E. Forster, Esq., in the chair.—A letter was read from Mr. E. Lees, accompanied with specimens of rare British Rubi. Amongst these was a variety of *R. idaeus*, with a ternate foliage, of which Mr. Lees had seen many specimens, and which he proposed to call *R. i. fragariae similes*.—A collection of 140 species of plants, including several rare forms of Myrtaceæ, collected by Mr. Drummond at Swan River, was presented by Mr. Hugh Low.—Mr. J. Allard was elected a Fellow.—A continuation of Mr. Newport's paper on the *Myriapoda Chilopoda* was read.

May 7.—E. Forster, Esq., in the chair.—Professor Agassiz, and Dr. M. J. Schleiden, of Jena, were elected Foreign Fellows. Dr. Hugh Falconer and Mr. G. B. Sowerby, jun. were elected Fellows. Dr. Francis Boott, M.D., Prof. E. Forbes, and the Rev. Wm. Hinckes, were elected Auditors.—A paper was announced from J. Curtis, Esq., being descriptions of Insects brought from the Straits of Magellan by Capt. King.—A paper was begun from Mr. J. Woods, 'On the species of Carex found in Middle Europe.'

HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY.—Sir C. Lemon, Bart. M.P. in the chair. The Earl of Leicester, P. Greenall, Esq. M.P., and J. Shepherd, Esq., were elected Fellows.—From S. Rucker, Esq. was a variety (?) of *Angulosa Clowesii*, having large yellow flowers richly spotted in the interior with brown. This is a rare species of that hitherto almost unknown genus. A Banksian medal was awarded for it.—From Messrs. Veitch & Son, of Exeter, was an Oxalis that was sent from Chili by their collector, Mr. Lobb. It is new to gardens, and will, no doubt, be an acquisition, as it is stated to be hardy, having survived all last winter, planted out on rockwork. A certificate was awarded for it.—Mr. Chapman sent a basket of Dutch Sweetwater Grapes, some bunches of which weighed three-quarters of a pound; a certificate was awarded for them.—From R. W. Barchard, Esq. was a Strawberry-plant, exhibiting a curious instance of monstrosity in the fruit, most of them being fingered; some had three fingers, others had four,

and in one case as many as five fingers were produced. By this singular malformation the fruit was of a very unusual shape.—H. H. Oddie, Esq. sent a Cantaloupe Melon, stated to be a seedling of his own, together with a green-flesh variety. These were good early fruit, particularly the former: they were said to have been grown in a three-light box, on a bed formed of billet and rubbish wood, about two feet deep, with six inches of long litter spread regularly over them. Above this were placed eighteen inches of leaves and dung. The soil was the top spit from a common, and strong loam. It was put in as rough as possible, and trod quite firm. The plants were watered twice with the drainings of the dunghill, and once with guano mixed with water, at the rate of one ounce to a gallon of water. No manure whatever was used in the soil; a certificate was awarded.

BOTANICAL SOCIETY.—May 3.—J. E. Gray, Esq. F.R.S., President, in the chair.—Prof. Allman, J. T. Mackay, Esq., and T. C. Hunt, Esq., H.M. Consul at St. Michael's, Azores, were elected Members.—A specimen of *Barkhausia setosa* was presented by G. S. Gibson, Esq., which was stated to have been found by Dr. J. B. Wood in corn fields at Withington, near Manchester. A specimen of *Primula vulgaris*, bearing three flowers on a long slender scape, was exhibited from Mr. D. Stock, of Bungay, as an example of the plant usually (though incorrectly) called *Primula elatior* by the botanists of that part of England. Having been enclosed in a post letter, before dried, it was too much shrivelled to admit of its being assigned quite certainly to the variety *Caulescens* of the London catalogue. The variety *Intermedia* of the same catalogue, usually bears ten or twenty flowers on a scape, and approximates to the cowslip in its deep colour and short pubescence. A monstrosity of *Primula vulgaris* was also presented by Mr. D. Stock. In this specimen a short peduncle terminated in a funnel-shaped calyx formed by the adhesion of fifteen sepals, and inclosing two distinct corollas; the limb of one corolla being divided into eight lobes, that of the other into seven.—Read, 'A Synoptical View of the British Fruticose Rubi, arranged in groups, with explanatory remarks,' (Part II.) by E. Lees, Esq. F.L.S.

ROYAL INSTITUTION.—May 10.—Lord Prudhoe, President, in the chair.—Rev. John Barlow, Sec. R.I., gave a communication on the chemical and mechanical processes, and the social influences of the Penny Post. Mr. Barlow said that he took this subject because it exhibited one of those instances where immense mental labour, ingenuity, and applied science were required to produce the most familiar articles of common use. The notion of separating, by a system of stamps, the financial department of the Post-office from the transmission and delivery of letters, originated with Mr. C. Whiting, fourteen years since. This gentleman has been rewarded by the government for the taste and mechanical skill exhibited in the method in which he proposed to adjust his plan to the penny-rate adopted at the recommendation of Mr. Rowland Hill. With this notice of the history of letter-stamps, Mr. Barlow entered on the manufacture of the adhesive label. These are executed by Messrs. Perkins, Bacon, and Petch, on Mr. Perkins's principle of steel engraving by transfer. The process depends on the property of iron to become hard or soft as it receives or loses a small quantity of carbon. This was demonstrated by experiment; and the description of the process was illustrated by the exhibition of hard and soft steel rollers, plates, and impressions furnished by Messrs. Perkins & Co. Mr. Barlow laid great stress on the absolute identity of every engraving, however numerous, produced by this method. He then observed, that the engine-work on the adhesive labels is of so close pattern that it cannot be taken off by lithography or any similar contrivance, while, on the other hand, the eye is so accustomed to notice slight differences between one face and another, that the most skilful imitators of a minute engraving of a human countenance (as that of the Sovereign on the label) could not possibly avoid such a deviation from what he was copying as would ensure the detection of a forgery. Mr. Barlow next adverted to the qualities of the coloured inks with which the labels are printed. Though sufficiently permanent to withstand

the effects of sun-light, rain, &c., they would be discharged by any fraudulent attempt made to remove the obliterating stamp, for the purpose of issuing the label a second time. The gum used for fixing these labels to letters, Mr. Barlow described as being probably derived from potato-starch, and therefore perfectly innocuous. The manufacture of the postage envelope is effected by many powerful, yet accurate machines. The paper is pervaded by coloured threads as a security against fraud. When sent from the manufactory of Messrs. Dickinson, it is delivered to the firm of Messrs. De la Rue. It is there cut into lozenges by the engine of Mr. Wilson. One of these was exhibited, and its power contrasted with that of the old bookbinder's plough. Thirteen thousand five hundred lozenges for folding were cut in a few seconds. To exhibit the precision of this engine, 1000 strips of paper, each exactly $\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch in width, were cut in the same short time. Previously to being stamped, each lozenge has a notch cut in each side, for the convenience of folding: this is done by an angular chisel. The envelopes are then stamped at Somerset House. The machine used for this purpose, combines the operations of printing and embossing, and was invented by the late Sir W. Congreve. Mr. C. Whiting enabled Mr. Barlow to exhibit the whole process, by sending one of these machines, which executed several stamps, slightly differing in device from that on the postage envelope. One of Mr. De la Rue's folders also attended, and showed the rapidity with which the envelopes are folded and gummed after they are stamped. The government envelopes employ at Messrs. De la Rue's thirty-nine folders on an average, and a quick hand can fold 3,000 in a day. Mr. Barlow then noticed some statistical conclusions. One engraving on Mr. Perkins's hard steel roller will afford 1,680 transfers to soft steel plates; these again will, when hardened, admit of 60,000 impressions being pulled from each, so that one original will afford 100,800,000 impressions of labels, enough to paper one thousand apartments 24 feet by 15 feet, and 12 feet high, making allowance for door, two windows, chimney, pier glass, and dado. Twelve years ago, common envelopes were sold at 1s. the dozen; now, the postage envelope, with its medallion, may be bought, wholesale, at half a farthing (exclusive of the stamp), and yet, though the manufacture is peculiarly costly, it returns a small profit to the government. More than two hundred and twenty millions of chargeable letters were posted in 1843. Now, taking a common sized letter as an unit, this quantity would pave a road 25 yards wide (the average width of Oxford Street, pavement included) from the General Post Office in London, to the entrance of Oxford. Or, supposing all the letter-boxes in the United Kingdom to be open twelve hours in the day, and to communicate with one large spout, the letters would keep flowing through it at the mean rate of 14 in a second. Mr. Barlow then briefly noticed some of the social advantages of the penny post. He touched on the strength and permanence it afforded to the influences of home—on the motives for self-education which it supplied—on the aid it ministered to the inquirer after truth. He stated, that at present about five millions sterling are forwarded through the Post-office by money-orders, and noticed the advantage of this arrangement to all, but especially the humbler ranks. He asserted that nothing is too valuable or too fragile to be trusted to this cheap conveyance: birds' eggs and diamonds, living insects, and watches, pills, plasters, and bills of exchange, are committed to it with equal confidence. Mr. Bagster sends each sheet of his Polyglott edition of the Holy Scriptures ten times through the Post-office, some of these transmissions being to learned men residing at a distance from London, so that under the old system the postage on each volume of this work would have amounted to 16s. Mr. Barlow concluded by a short but expressive quotation from an anonymous writer, declaratory of the manifold benefits of the Penny Post, and of the obligations which the country owes to the originator of the system.

MEETINGS FOR THE ENSUING WEEK.

Horticultural Society.—Chiswick Meeting.
Statistical Society, 8, P.M.
British Architectural, 8.

TUES. Chiswick, 8. Account of the plan adopted by W. P. White, for raising the *Juniper* steamer sunk in the river Lee, near Cork (Ireland); by G. P. White.—'Essay upon the causes of preventing, and method of determining the

- amount of priming in Steam Boilers.' by R. Pollock.—'Description of a Cofferdam used for closing the end of the building slips at H. M. Dockyard, Woolwich,' by B. Snow.
 WED. Society of Arts, & General Business.—Ballot.
 THUR. Royal Society, half-past 4.
 ROYAL ACADEMY.—
 Royal Society of Literature, 4.
 Society of Antiquaries, 8.
 FRI. Royal Linnean Society, past 8.—W. Ogilby, Sec. Zool. Soc.
 —On Geology as applied to Draining.
 Linnean Society, 1.—Anniversary.

FINE ARTS

ROYAL ACADEMY.

THE "gem," to which we last week alluded, is Mr. Mulready's *Whistorian Controversy* (128), from the 'Vicar of Wakefield,' a work, first in its class, though its class be not the first. But let those who swoon with ecstasy over a picture of the Flemish school, assert, if they dare, that any of their dear, familiar pictures has a higher value than this, as regards detail, finish, colour, quiet humour, and closeness in telling of the story. Here, though the tints are perhaps hotter than we like—as though a *Gathercole* atmosphere intervened between the gazer and the reverend controversialists,—the mannerism of colour which of late years seemed overgrowing its artist's works, has been cast aside. All is sound and rich; pencilled with a firmness, and finished with a delicacy, as rare as they are meritorious. We may be excused, however, for wishing that Mr. Mulready had bestowed as much elaborate care on the more attractive design of *The Wedding Gown* (598), which hangs among the drawings. He has another small cabinet-picture (140), *The Intercepted Billet*, which will also delight the lovers of his peculiar style, though less excellent than its neighbour.

The next work to be noticed is, *The Daughter of Jairus* (156). This needed not the name of Mr. Eddis, appended to it, by way of invitation, to any who remember that artist's 'Ruth': since the deep feeling with which both pictures are instinct is expressed in the same forms, and with a like timidity of hand; the heads, too, the tones of colour, nay, the very folding of the draperies, are alike in both. The picture is devotional, but not spiritual, if the distinction admissible; it has a familiarity of contour and expression, which will recall to many a bereaved parent the sick-bed he had himself watched, in place of being elevated to a contemplation of the couch, by the side whereof the Healer stood,—and where the anguish of pain, and the squalor of mortality, were sublimed by the presence of Divinity. We recollect many sacred pictures of the Flemish school, amenable to a like criticism—but few in which holiness was not associated with coarseness. This is not the case here; there is the purity, if not the dignity, which the subject demands.

We can but say one word of *The Study* (165), by Mr. Macrise, a girl, in a fantastic dress, coqueting with a parrot, since we shall take leave to make a digression from this to the artist's *Undine* (277), in the outer room:—little picture, full of genius and fantastic eccentricity. What a life must there be in that German fairy-tale, thus again and again to take hold of the fancy of our artists! The reader need not be told, that, in the affluence of elfin gambol, there is no contemporary Retzsch and Neurether not excepted, who can compete with our Irish artist. The wood, through which the fragile and exquisite water-sprite is conducted, by Huldrbrand, teems with creatures of the earth, peeping out from briar and foxglove bell,—swinging from the branches, to mock the pair as they pass,—launching their tiny and spiteful menaces against horse and rider, till even the Bride herself, gamesome and aerial as the wreaths of mist which career over lawn and lake at early day, looks scared and bewildered, by the throngs which rise up, now here, now there, to intercept her progress. In the midst of them all, towers a more gloomy and threatening shape,—the stormykinsman of the maiden. Here, though vaporous, the sprite Kuhleborn is still darker and more solid than we believe him to have been, according to the chronicle. Mr. Macrise has figured him in the guise of thunder-cloud, and who shall adjudge between his version and ours?—An objection less difficult to grapple with, perhaps, is the want of air in the picture, the first aspect of which reminds us of one of those antique furniture compositions of flowers and arabesques, encircling some

chosen portrait, rather than a scene in a wood, even of fairy-land.

Returning to "the line" in the Great Room, many delight, with ourselves, to linger in the *Chapel of the Church of St. Jean at Caen* (170), brought hither by the witchcraft of Mr. Roberts. Of late years,—willing, nevertheless, to believe that the darkness was in our "ain een,"—we have feared that this excellent painter, foremost among those who have addicted themselves to the picturesque of old continental architecture, was becoming careless and slight in his execution, and more strongly tintured by reminiscences of the scene-painter's room than was fitting. This picture, however, belies our misgivings, by the truth and nature, yet within painter's art, which it reveals. Every splendid detail of the corrupt architecture, and strange mingling of Gothic and Grecian forms, is touched with sensitive precision. The treatment of light and shadow is rich, simple and effective, the groupings of the figures inartificial, yet characteristic. How different, in its whole humour, is such a work as this, from those clear, cold interiors by Steenwyk and Neefs, which also, enchant us by their truth. Can there be two versions then of one and the same fact, both equally correct? It is a nice question for the casuists; a sufficient rebuke, let us add, to certain of the controversialists.

About the *Jubal* (177), however, of Mr. Howard, there will be hardly two opinions. Our next step then is to Mr. Hart's *Interior of the Cathedral of Modena* (197), which, with other contributions by the artist, would seem to announce a change of style from the one which won him his reputation in certain graphic and vivid Israelitish scenes. Though the time be morning, we see no need of the midday chilliness of tone pervading the picture, when the daylight is Italian; for the interior of a church or chapel on the steamy banks of some Dutch polder, the tone of colour would be appropriate. Here, too, the architecture, though quaint, is not sufficiently picturesque for an artist's purpose, and the picture may detain the eye, but will not engage it to return. But a work in which all these peculiarities are more fully developed, is Mr. Hart's *James the First of Scotland* (453), watching from the window of his Windsor prison, the Lady Jane Beaufort, when, like Eve, she

—rose, and went forth amid her fruits and flowers. In this the painter seems to have been unconsciously influenced by the spirit of the *ars topia*, which so trimmed and arranged the garden, with all its pleached alleys. He is feeble and formal, almost to the height of old Flemish primness; as quaint as the verse from "The King's Quhair," which serves him for motto; but giving small evidence of the strength which keeps pace with the quaintness of the old poem. In some of his details we could fancy him to have remembered the 'Olivia and Malvolio' of Mr. Macrise; or perhaps both have unconsciously referred to one and the same far distant original, with which we are unacquainted.

What an advance has been made by Mr. Uwins since the days when his book-illustrations were an attraction to the cheap and popular editions of British Classics! His *John proclaiming the Messiah* (211), may justly be styled the best sacred picture in the Great Room, from its depth and propriety of feeling, perhaps, rather than from any peculiar felicity of treatment. There is great purity and gentleness in the central figure, who walks placidly in the gleam of sunshine, which throws glory on the turf he treads. The Good Shepherd is present to us, in all the simple holiness of his pastoral office. There is something, too, at once poetical and scriptural in the greater strength (not sublimity) of the figure of the admiring Saint, which recalls to us the rock and wilderness, where his faith was cradled; the adoration of the other disciples is gentler, though not less intense. Coming from the primary to the secondary object of interest in a picture, we must regret that the colour of this thoughtful work is so little satisfactory. The greyish-blue sky, the herbage underneath the feet of the Christ, the draperies and the flesh of all the figures have at once a feeble and clayey appearance, which, though intended, it may be, to express the calm which should clothe so holy a subject, is assuredly a failure. Mr. Uwins has got clear of the perhaps too

warm tints, which distinguished his Italian scenes and flower girls; and now seems in some risk of touching the other extreme.

Not omitting to notice two life-size studies of rustic figures, called *Difidence* (210) and *Confidence* (222), by Mr. Hannah, we shall only on the present occasion further advert to Mr. Redgrave's Illustration (227) of 'The Song of the Shirt,' as too sentimental: the real picture for the lyric would be too saddening if painted, and our artist has only reached a sort of theatrical and elegant sorrow. Let him beware lest a tendency in this direction does not prejudice a genius capable of truer and better things. We do not find his *Wedding Morning* (238), in the Middle Room, by any means worthy of his reputation. It seems to us feeble and sickly: and the drawing, too, to call loudly for vigour and correction. We cannot do better, by way of pointing our warning, than quote a paragraph from a source to which we are already indebted, Mrs. Jameson's 'Private Galleries of Art in London.' "Let us ever keep in mind," she says, "that there must be some criterion to appeal to, higher and more fixed than the power of feeling—association, which varies with every individual, and it is reduced very low, when artists are driven to rely on mere common-place associations. Hence is it that we are overwhelmed with *tableaux de genre*, and things painted for Art-Unions and Annuals. 'A Bridesmaid weeping in white satin,' 'Gems of Beauty,' and 'Flowers of Loveliness,' or such trash, cherished by the namby-pamby taste of the fine ladies, on whose tables you find these wretched wiry things, with their mean contours and conventional prettinesses. No wonder that the admirers of such should think the Delphic Sibyl 'masculine,' and denounce 'The Hours' in Guido's 'Aurora' as 'coarse.'" We are glad from time to time to cite such corroborations to our own strictures, in proof that they are not mere "crotchets."

Above Mr. Redgrave's picture hangs a work of deeper and sadder interest, from which the heart turns with pain,—Mr. Duncan's *Martyrdom of John Brown of Priesthill* (239): the same artist's *Cupid* (216) in the Great Room, shows us his mastery over form, but in this we have a power to move, which lacks but regulation to be turned to good account. The gloom over this dismal scene of murder is too dark and severe, as we fear time may prove; but the figure of the slaughtered man is appalling, and that of the watcher at his side, might, but for the familiar costume, almost pass for 'Rizpah, the daughter of Aizah' watching her dead. We must notice, too, though more slightly, as its subject demands, the *Jenny Denison* (247) of the late Mr. Geddes, one of the best—we are sorry to add, the last of that gentleman's female fancy portraits. The picture which will attract the most glances to this section of the Middle Room is, the *King Joash shooting the Arrow of Deliverance* (248), a work as eminent for its singularity as for its power. The Royal archer and the Prophet, whose bidding guides his arm, are both drawn and painted with a vigour unusual in the English school. There is no slovenly effect-work, but a completeness and sinew, which, if they verge upon metallic hardness, are not, in this peculiar subject, wholly misplaced. But we see not why the King of Israel should be represented as naked as an athlete, save for a few gaudy scarfs and bracelets, such as indeed might befit an Indian prepared for a war-dance, or a Fakir of the East, but hardly a Jewish monarch. Then, too, there is not sufficient discrimination between the fire of expectation which animates his features, and the fire of prophecy which speaks in the countenance of the seer. The picture, however, has a spirit and a force for which we were unprepared: the artist's predilections, to judge from his earlier works, having been principally bent towards the mysticism and quietude of the schools of early Christian Art.

This variety, almost as desirable in an artist as that general culture, lacking which the painter becomes a mere colourman, is an aim we are justified in recommending to Mr. Frost—by that gentleman's *Nymphs Dancing* (262); which will recall to everyone the cartoon in the Westminster Hall exhibition: but is, otherwise, a graceful and desirable cabinet picture. Passing a work or two, by Mr. Cope, to which, however, we may return, we shall close the present week's notice before Mr. E. Landseer's *Return*

of the Dove to the Ark (No. 287), a picture which attracts many gazers, and was the subject of many a private "yea" and "nay" previous to its being exhibited. Glad as we are to welcome the painter on other domains than the well-trodden one of knight in mail and Puritan in buff coat, we must consider this attempt at the Old Testament singular rather than successful. The deeds of Noah have generally been essayed by painters of the minute and pains-taking school, (the grander design of Raphael not forgotten, so nobly described by Charles Lamb, in his Essay on 'The Imaginative Faculty in the Productions of Modern Art,') and many a quaint old Flemish picture recurs to us rich in animal life and in perspective detail, and valuable, we presume, in its day, in proportion as the canvas embraced the largest number of the creatures of the menagerie. Here, though we cannot but fancy that the elephant's proboscis and the gay plumage of the paroquets so coquettishly perched (with the raven by way of foil) round about the central mast, have had some share in directing the choice of the subject—the main interest is ostensibly human, and belonging to the members of the patriarchal family. These, we think, are but conventionally rendered, a preternatural solemnity being given to Noah, by an exaggeration of his senility, which make the boyish forms and faces of his offspring almost absurd, by contrast. Nor are the females clear of that fatal prettiness on which Mrs. Jameson so vigorously lectures. In brief, this work, though, alas! the very thing to become immoderately popular, fails in both its aspects, according to the standard we must needs apply. Portions of it, however, are very delicately touched.

Architectural Drawings.

The room allotted to the architectural exhibitors always seems to accuse, as the French say, both the architect of the building, and the Royal Academy,—and to indicate the opinion in which architectural drawings are held by the visitors. One might imagine, that in the vocabulary of the Academy, "to exhibit" means "to put out of sight." Every year there are, in this room, a great number of *non-exhibited* exhibitors, who find their works mere gap-stoppers, to fill up chinks, in order that the whole surface of the walls from the very floor to the ceiling may be covered with frames. Possibly many of the things which cannot be seen, are not worth looking at. Such is certainly the case with not a few of those which perch themselves in our faces; but then it becomes a question whether it would not be better policy, on the part of the Academy, to admit no more works than can be so placed as to be properly seen, and to take care that they are all of some positive merit as productions of Art. There should be some difference between an Academy of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, and a picture bazaar or auction room—a greater difference certainly than according to the actual system.

In no department of the Exhibition are the defects of that system more glaring, than in the architectural room. Yet small as it is, the architects are not permitted to have it exclusively to themselves. Of 218 subjects forming the *omnium gatherum* crammed into this room, not above one-half are architectural, and even of those, many are neither original designs nor make us acquainted with buildings not before represented. We do not, however, mean to say that the exclusion of oil-pictures would afford more space for architectural drawings: on the contrary, it would, in one respect, be better were the walls entirely covered with oil-paintings, to within about seven feet from the floor, because then no drawings could be placed so high as to be indistinguishable. What we object to, is the mixing up portraits and all sorts of heterogeneous subjects, with elevations and other architectural drawings, so that, in the catalogue, this room presents a curious jumble: for instance, No. 1097, is a 'Cottage Interior,' and the one immediately following, 'Approach to the Great Temple at Karnac from the avenue of Sphinxes.' In like manner, we have thus curiously coupled together 'The Folkstone Viaduct,' and the 'Wandering Minstrel'; the 'New Rectory-house at Wetheringtsett,' and the 'Royal Steam Yacht Victoria and Albert'; 'Crowland Abbey,' and 'Favourite Hounds'; 'Interior of the Chapter-house at Howdon,' and 'Watering Cattle'; the 'North Aisle of Westminster,'

and an 'Overshot Mill.' If pictures may intrude into the Architectural Room, architectural drawings might, in fairness, be allowed to do the same among pictures in the other rooms. There certainly could be no objection whatever to putting up a low screen in each of the larger rooms, and hanging a single line of architectural drawings on both sides of it; for, in that case, they would not at all interfere with the pictures on the walls, or take up room. We, therefore, venture to recommend to the Academy's Professor of Architecture to take our suggestion into consideration before next season.

It looks, however, as if the Professor did not bestir himself much, in regard to his own art, at the annual exhibition, for he is again, this year, an absentee. In fact, absenteeism prevails among the architects, there being fewer names of note than usual—very few indeed of members of the Institute. Neither are there many subjects which show us buildings which are either actually in progress, or about to be begun, except it be churches. We rather expected to meet with some view of the inner area of the Royal Exchange—greatly altered as it is from the first idea as shown at the time in published drawings—which would have informed us to what extent decoration is to be carried out within the porticos or ambulatory, and what is likely to be its effect. We also looked forward to seeing the interior, both of the Great Hall and of the Library, in the new buildings at Lincoln's Inn; yet they are probably kept in reserve until they shall have been completed, as many matters of detail may at present not be fully decided upon. Some drawing of the new Conservative Clubhouse in St. James's Street we expected as a matter of course; yet, whether it be that we scented it away by our remarks (Feb. 3), here it is not. In lieu of it, however, we find another design for the same building by Mr. Hopper (1218), which has the merit of reconciling us to the one adopted, which is upon the whole the better—most decidedly so as regards the columnar portion; Mr. Hopper has the advantage of having the entrance in the centre of the front, and he has placed a *projecting* bow-window at each end of the ground floor; but as features in the composition, those bows are blemishes—unightly excrescences, trivial and insignificant in character. Further, instead of taking warning by Nash's unlucky sample of columination in the United Service Clubhouse, Mr. H. has imitated—hardly for the better, by making an upper and lower portico—a tetra-style one placed over an hexa-style; therefore, what with these projections, and those of the bow-windows, his façade seems to be all in a flutter. In fact, we should not have noticed this drawing, but for the title it bears, and its professed subject, it being interesting to learn of what mark and quality were any of the other designs which came into competition with that by Messrs. Bassevi and Smirke: if the latter had no more formidable rivals than the one here exhibited, it is no wonder that it should have obtained the preference.

We are not at all disappointed at not finding any drawing of the British Museum façade, although, after so much has been said about it, many may have supposed that Sir Robert Smirke would at least condescend to gratify the public by a sight of it. Perhaps it is as well that he has not done so, for the sight might have dazzled their eyesight, or it might have so completely engrossed attention at the *lion* of the Architectural Room, that nothing else would have been looked at. Had it been exhibited and placed *vis-à-vis* to Mr. Barry's 'Palace of Westminster,' the latter might have suffered total eclipse. We are, however, obliged to Mr. Barry for sending such a glorious pair of architectural drawings—pictures, or even cabinet pictures, we might call them, for they are far more pictorial than the majority of the oil-paintings in other rooms. As pictures, they are entitled to unqualified admiration: the accessories are splendid; and show both the 'Palace' and the 'Bridge' to the utmost advantage. Still we cannot help feeling some sort of misgiving in regard to what is a rather important consideration, viz., "*will*" it be possible to see one structure, or "*would*" it be possible to behold the other just as they are here represented? We apprehend not: the Thames is not *terra firma*, nor has any one as yet "*set fire*" to it; where then are we to station ourselves so as to obtain a view of the buildings as they are here represented? The cata-

logue tells us at Lambeth, and near the foot of the New Hungerford Bridge; but then what is to approximate those points so closely to Westminster, that from either of them we shall be able to see Mr. Barry's buildings so vividly and distinctly, as we here behold them? Possibly Hungerford Bridge may be induced to put out its "*foot*" so far into the Thames, that by standing upon it we should be just where the artist has placed us in view; but Lambeth has no "*feet*," merely a "*head*." The pictorial licence taken by the artist in regard to the perspective station is allowable enough in itself; but in this particular case is likely to mislead. It is curious to compare the 'Palace of Westminster,' as now proposed to be completed, with the view of the river front of the 'Proposed New Houses of Parliament,' which we published in 1836. The architect's ideas have augmented and expanded themselves most astonishingly in the interim. Sculptural decoration, niches, canopies, figures, devices, and armorial bearings, have been unspuriously applied where nothing of the kind was originally "proposed." Additional towers now shoot up, and two of them are of very considerable magnitude. We presume that the central one is intended to serve as the "chimney" required for carrying into effect Dr. Reid's system of ventilation and heating; and if so, the necessity for it can hardly be disputed; but it certainly does not at all tell its purpose, therefore, we think it would be better to make it as little conspicuous a feature as possible in the general design, instead of making it appear like a church tower and spire. But if utility justifies the introduction of that tower, such is not the case in regard to the clock-tower, which has now swollen out so enormously beyond the dimensions at first assigned it. Surely there can be no occasion, at the present day, to rear so lofty a structure merely to exhibit in the upper part of it most gigantic clock-dials. Before clocks and watches were in general use, a large clock, *pro bono publico*, in the tower of a church or a town hall, was proper and serviceable enough, whereas now, when almost every mechanic carries a watch in his pocket, there does not seem to be any occasion for a clock at all on the outside of the Palace of Westminster. We grant, however, that this tower is characteristic enough of its purpose, for in its general shape and mass it does bear a strong, perhaps an unlucky, resemblance to an old-fashioned upright clock-case. Besides, the dials themselves are of such size as to cause some of the other features, even oriel windows, to look small by comparison. It strikes us also that the three principal towers (the 'Victoria' being one of them) are too dissimilar from each other in character to be suitable for a pile which, extensive as it is, is marked by uniformity and regularity in almost all other respects. This last objection may look like hyper-criticism, nor will we affirm that it is not; accordingly, we make it rather for the purpose of eliciting the opinions of others, than of dogmatically insisting on the validity of our own. Here we might stop speaking of Mr. Barry's pile, had he himself stopped extending his ideas beyond the parts we have been speaking of; instead of such being the case, we now perceive that he "suggests" the extending his plan so greatly, that the north end of the 'Palace' would be advanced as far as Bridge Street, and form a façade along the whole south side of it; further, that the houses on the opposite side of the street should be cleared away, and a sort of garden or shrubbery, inclosed by balustrades, be laid out on their site; at least the drawing expresses as much, and indeed the present houses would be very ill company for Mr. Barry's 'Palace'—far worse than the present Westminster Bridge to his river-front. As to his own "suggested" bridge, it belongs to the Gothic style, even that of the latest period, only in its decoration, there being nothing of the "pointed" character in the arches themselves, which are elliptical; besides which, the parapet railing, like mere railing, is too light and open.

Prof. Hosking also exhibits, in Nos. 1143, and 1148, plans and other geometrical drawings for the reconstruction of Westminster Bridge, upon the present piers, whereas Mr. Barry substitutes an entirely new structure of only five arches. The two architects differ, therefore, widely as to their notions of economy. Differ also they do quite as much as to taste; for although Mr. Hosking's bridge has pointed arches, and so far looks, at first sight, more

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decidedly Gothic, it is of a character that would rather contrast than accord with the 'Palace of Westminster.'

MUSIC AND THE DRAMA

SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY, EXETER HALL.—
FRIDAY EVENING, the 21st of May, 1844, will be performed Handel's Oratorio, 'The CREATION.' Principal Vocal Performers, Madame Caradori Allan, Mr. Hobbs, and Herr Staudigl. The Band and Chorus will consist of above Five Hundred Performers. Tickets 2s. each, Gallery Reserved Seats 5s., may be had at the Principal Music-sellers or of Mr. Bowley, 33, Charing Cross; Mr. Mitchell, 29, Charing Cross—and of Mr. Ries, 102, Strand, opposite Exeter Hall.

THOMAS BREWER, Hon. Sec.

* The Doors will be opened at Half-past Seven, and the Performance commence Eight o'clock.

THE ONLY GREAT CHORAL MEETING for this Season of the Upper Singing Schools, instructed on the METHOD OF WILHELM, as published under the SANCTION of the Committee of Privy Council on Education, will be held on Friday evening, the 21st of MAY, 1844, at Eight o'clock, under the Direction of MR. JOHN STAUDIGL. The SEMI-CHORUS will consist of FIVE HUNDRED VOICES, and the CHORUS of ONE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED VOICES. Programme. Part I. SACRED MUSIC—Hymn, 'O Lord! another day is flown'; Michael Haydn—Anthem, 'My God, look upon me'; Bassoon's Introit, 'O most merciful God!'; John Hullah—Motet, 'Thou art beautiful'; Giovanni Croce—Quartette, 'O remember not the offences'; Rossini ('Stabat Mater')—Cantus, 'Thou shall show me', Dr. Caldicott's Part-Song, 'Behold the Lamb'; Dr. Arne—Glee, 'Sing, Music'; National Song, 'Rule, Britannia!'; Dr. Arne—Glee, 'Shall the lark'; Dr. Cooke—Part Song, 'My Lady is as fair as fine'; Bennett—Madrigal, 'Oh! how sweet, Sir John Rogers—Ranz des Vaches'; Come, Shepherdess; Grant—Glee, 'Upon the poplar bough'; Paxton—Madrigal, 'I will sing on everybody'; Signor Almaviva—Haydn's Glee;—National Anthem, 'God save the Queen'. Tickets, for the Reserved Seats on Platfrom, price 10s.; Reserved Seats, Western Gallery, 5s.; Area, 3s.: to be had only of Mr. Parker, Publisher, 445, West Strand, between the hours of Eleven and Five, daily.

THEATRE ROYAL, ADELPHI,

Open Every Evening,

With the GREAT WIZARD of the NORTH'S WONDERS of NATURE MAGIC and EXPERIMENTAL PHILOSOPHY as performed before the Queen Dowager, Sir Robert Peel, K.C.B., at Whitye Park, and 500 nights at the Strand and Adelphi Theatres—they have no parallel!!!

NEW DELUSIONS EVERY EVENING

are added to the Wizard's extraordinary performances. The Highland Dancer, with their Pipes, who, with the honour of dancing before the Queen at Taymouth and Dalkeith Castles during Her Majesty's visit to Scotland. The Three Arab Brothers will also appear and go through their most clever and beautiful performances. This is the most fashionable and wonderful Entertainment in London.

Doors open at half-past Six, the Wizard appears at Seven o'clock.

Boxe, 2s. Pit, 1s. Gd. Second Price at Nine o'clock.

PHILHARMONIC CONCERTS.—The engagement of Dr. Mendelssohn Bartholdy may be considered, we hope, as the commencement of a new era. It amounts, virtually, to a reconstruction of the laws of the Philharmonic Society—or rather, perhaps, to such an acknowledgment of weakness and insufficiency as must lead to reconstruction. We shall therefore follow the course of these meetings, conducted by him, with a minuteness which would be absurd were any other than a model concert in question; and that, too, on the verge (if the Directors please) of the regeneration of the Society. What our guest is to do—apart from counsels, to which circumstances give double weight, and zeal in research which our English professional life renders next to impossible—was felt at the rehearsal, on Saturday; when the orchestra was fairly compelled to "buckle to" its duty with a new and strange closeness of attention. The trial of Mozart's familiar symphony in E flat, must have been amazing to some, interesting to others—humiliating perhaps to a few, who remember Philharmonic rehearsals of entire symphonies infinitely more difficult at which the band has never once been stopped, and of solos where neglect sufficient to destroy the chance of singer or instrumentalist has been overlooked. But increased care in preparation must be attended by another reform, important and welcome. The concert schemes must be retrenched, that the time and attention heretofore thrown away upon two symphonies may be bestowed upon one—and this not only for the comfort of the artists, but for the pleasure of the audience.

But enough of our prelude to the very interesting concert of Monday evening, at which dawns of a more careful and artistic style of performance were evident. In the Mozart symphony, for instance, we had expression attended to, and some of the many graces which are demanded to give such music its due effect. In the overture to 'Leonora,' No. 1, the orchestra's steadiness in meeting some difficulties of time, was new and praiseworthy. The composition, by the way, was very interesting—full of fragments of Beethoven in his best mood; though less calculated to enrapture the hearer than that grander and more widely-developed prelude which succeeded it, it possesses a charm of its own; inasmuch as we fancy the composer tried in it the same strain of feeling as he afterwards awakened with so much greater nerve

and brilliancy. In the second Act we had the conductor's own Symphony in a minor, better performed and better relished than on any previous occasion (the admirable scherzo could not pass without its *encore*), and Spohr's overture to 'Der Berggeist.' For solos, Mr. W. S. Bennett performed his concerto in C minor with his best execution; and Herr Pott the first movement of a rather dreary violin concerto, which became yet more wearying from the lateness of the hour at which it began. The lady singer was Madame Castellan. This artist has a powerful, true, moderately-extensive French soprano voice, as she showed in Meyerbeer's 'Va, dit elle'—evidencing also the command over brilliant execution in her rondo from 'La Sonnambula'; but how came so threadbare a stage song to be allowed at such a concert? With all her volubility, however, there was a certain heaviness of delivery which checked our pleasure in her vocal skill. Herr Staudigl brought back to us his best voice and his soundest and most impassioned German style in the elaborate bass scene from 'Euryanthe,' which, however, as a whole, we cannot like by way of concert song. The aria from Mozart's 'Die Entführung' was delightful, and executed with a force, vigour, and brilliancy not to be had elsewhere at present. Why are we never to have the whole charming opera—Mozart's most comic work—decently done? The Concert was well attended, and the audience silent and enthusiastic as occasion demanded.

CONCERTS OF THE WEEK.—There is just now, in London, three times as much vocal music, or thereabouts, as is to be found in any German or in the French metropolis, during its fullest season—twenty-eight pieces make but a moderate allowance for a programme as times go, the consequences being, the discourteous habit of audiences leaving the concert room when the entertainment is little more than half over: a practice particularly encouraging to young artists! who, of course, cannot expect a hearing at the earlier part of the performance. This length was the one drawback to Mr. Willy's Concert, which was otherwise an excellent entertainment: given, as so good a violinist's benefit should be, with an orchestra playing favourite overtures. The principal vocalist was Madame Dorus Gras, who has returned this season with new graces to her old songs: there is, assuredly, no French brilliant singing to be heard, comparable with hers: and it is a thing we have learned not to despise. Madame Puzzi's Concert, which "came off" on Wednesday, was the first of those brilliant meetings which are held in the Opera Concert Room: thickly starred with opera songs and opera singers. In the selection from the 'Stabat' of Rossini, the 'Inflammatus' of Madame Grisi was remarkable, for the splendour of voice with which it was delivered. The encores fell to Mrs. Shaw's ballad from M. Benedict's opera, and to a waltz (mislabelled a polonaise) from Signor Persiani's 'Fantasma,' which his lady executed with marvellous volatility: the composition being written in heights and divisions which no vocalist but herself could touch, and still essentially a poor and commonplace one. Madame Castellan and Miss Edwards were the newest singers—neither lady giving us cause to modify opinions already expressed. M. St. Leon was the violinist: wonderfully tricky as usual—but, in his most audacious passages, very nearly toneless. A new violincellist, M. Offenbach, appeared very late in the day, with great success. At Madame Caradori Allan's Concert, yesterday, the opera singers appeared in aid of the *bénéfice*, as well as M. Salvi and Herr Staudigl. M. Joachim played Ernst's fantasia from 'Otello' most admirably. M. Parish Alvars, the newest arrived of the pianists, a grand solo, and displayed (to define briefly) a mixture of the older and newer executive graces, which we may have a future opportunity of analyzing.

ST. JAMES'S THEATRE.—If beauty made the actress, there are probably few, at present, on the stage, who would be more deeply moving in tragedy, in comedy more graceful, than Mlle. Plessy; and, it is hard wholly to disengage the judgment from the net-work by which personal fascinations impede its free and fair movements. But this done, at the expense of gallantry, we cannot award our guest higher praise than belongs to mediocrity—sweet, engaging, but

somewhat monotonous. Tone, gesture, feature, are reproduced in every character; and, but for the eye, the mind would, after a short acquaintance, become weary. It was not so with Mars—it is not so with Bouffé, or Lablache, or any real dramatic genius; however unbending the physiognomy, however recognizable the voice. Hence Mlle. Plessy is safest in the repertory of sentimental melo-drama, or in the comedy of intrigue, which belongs to the modern French stage. She could not, we imagine, play Molière; her version of Marivaux, as we last year remarked (No. 805), is not the true gossamer thing—and who can see her in Beaumarchais' immortal play, and forget the Suzanne to whom (alas! that Time is so mischievous!) she has succeeded? She is more successful, because not exposed to rivalry or remembrance in 'Les Demoiselles de St. Cyr'—the poorest of all the plays of M. Alexandre Dumas, though one of the most harmless—in 'Le Jour d'Orage'—or such a farcical piece of sprightliness as 'La Marquise de Semnetter': a tale of a young wife, whose only connubial fault has been too tender a fondness for her husband, and who adopts the very innocent (!) expedient of consulting the far-famed Marion de Lorme (Madame Pernon) as to the mode in which truant hearts may be reclaimed; ending by turning the tables on her husband, and beating her instructress with her own weapons, to the entire satisfaction of herself and audience. Nothing of the *ingenue* kind has been seen much prettier than Mlle. Plessy's first scenes in the house of Marion: than her timidity, her charming awkwardness, (on the whole, better than other people's graces), than her delicious dawnings of consciousness of a new power, as she watches the proceedings of her tutoress, and exclaims, "C'est étonnant, comme ça parait facile." In this sprightly piece of drollery, Mlle. Plessy is well supported. It is true that M. Gaston, as her truant husband, is not worth the reclaiming—but M. Volnay as *Cinq Mars*, plays the Bobadil with "emphasis and discretion"; so does M. Cartigny, the Commander and the *épouvantail* of the Court of Coquettes. Then, too, Madame Pernon, a new acquisition, (whose laughter-provoking powers at the Palais Royal we gaily remember,) if not precisely up to the mark of Beaumarchais' *Couvent des Almaviva*, is a very hearty and joyous Marion: with all the pettulances and pretty airs of the *roturier* class—yet not vulgar: and never unwomanly. We have already given a reason why the 'Figaro' in London is but the shadow of itself, to those who remember it in the Rue Richelieu. Yet there is life, construction, character, and serious interest in the play—a reflection of human thoughts and feelings unable to find more direct vent, strong enough to defy Time and transplantation. Sufficient attention has hardly been paid to these in England. The smart sayings of the *valets* have been quoted; but the philosophy of his character, in places trenching closely upon *bourgeois* tragedy, has not been proportionately dwelt upon. Should opportunity be afforded us, we may, hereafter, offer a few words on a comedy which, by essence and by accident, has always ranked with us among the highest masterworks of its class.

MISCELLANEA

Paris Academy of Sciences.—April 20.—A communication from M. Figuer 'On Oxygenated Gold,' was followed by some observations upon the substance called *pourpre de cassins*, and on fulminating gold.—A paper was received from M. Lassaigne, 'On the composition of the mud of the Nile.' From his analysis it appears to be a true silicate of hydrated alumine, of great fertilizing properties.—M. Jobert communicated a paper 'On the Electric Powers of the Torpedo.' This gentleman, like many other writers on the subject, assigns them to the nervous system.—Some experiments on the action of colouring matter given as food to rabbits were communicated by M. Bouisson. It appears from them, that the colouring matter does not reach the chyle, unless the coloured food be given for a long period. In the first instance, it is absorbed by the venous system.

Organist of Christ's Hospital.—"The farce is over; and one of the candidates who had the dishonour to be selected as a foil to the Nominee, and who went on to the last hours with a simplicity that justified the choice, soliciting votes, has returned 'his grateful thanks' to those 'who expressed their regret at

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being unable to support me, in consequence of my being late in the field,' although, as he naïvely adds, 'I announced myself a candidate the day after the death of the late organist!' I confess I like these apologists. There is a good sound serviceable assurance in telling a man that your vote was promised before the late officer was dead, and three weeks or a month, at least, before you went through the form of declaring the situation vacant, and advertising for candidates! I like them, because they honestly told the truth. It is only to be regretted that they had no sense of either truth or shame a month earlier, when they issued their advertisement. Now let us inquire into the constitution of the Court of Almoners—consider the qualifications of those who presumed to sit in judgment, and to test the comparative claims of the candidates. * * Be it understood, however, that I have no special objection to the gentleman who has been chosen to fill the office. He is the worthy son of a worthy father—a young man of irreproachable character; and if he be not a man of genius or acquirements, if he be not in fact what ought to be understood when we speak of an accomplished musician, he is as well qualified as his predecessor, and as fully competent to do the nothing, which the Almoners require, as a better man.—**AN ORGANIST.** [We have sadly mutilated this letter, but our correspondent was far too personal. We heartily agree with him in denouncing the cruelty of soliciting professional men to become candidates for an office which was already promised—but he must keep clear of personality. We confess that each and every party concerned in such a proceeding deserves to be made a mark for public scorn to point its finger at; but we are strongly of opinion, that, in the long run, exposure is most effective when it directs attention to the wrong done, rather than to the wrong-doer.]

Origin of the Names of the American States.—Maine was so called as early as 1638, from Maine in France, of which Henrietta Maria, Queen of England, was at that time proprietor. New Hampshire was the name given to the territory conveyed by the Plymouth Company to Capt. John Mason, by patent, November 7, 1639, with reference to the patentee, who was Governor of Portsmouth, in Hampshire, England. Vermont was so called by the inhabitants in their declaration of independence, January 16, 1777, from the French *verd*, green, and *mont*, mountain. Massachusetts from a tribe of Indians in the neighbourhood of Boston. "I have learned," says Roger Williams, "that Massachusetts was so called from the Blue Hills." Rhode Island was named in 1644, in reference to the Island of Rhodes in the Mediterranean. Connecticut was so called from the Indian name of its principal river; New York in reference to the Duke of York and Albany, to whom this territory was granted. Pennsylvania was named in 1681, after William Penn. Delaware, in 1703, from Delaware Bay, on which it lies, and which received its name from Lord De la War, who died in this bay. Maryland, in honour of Henrietta Maria, Queen of Charles I., in his patent to Lord Baltimore, June 30, 1632. Virginia was named, in 1584, after Elizabeth, the virgin Queen of England. Carolina, by the French in 1564, in honour of King Charles IX. of France. Georgia, in 1772, in honour of King George III. Alabama, in 1817, from its principal river. Mississippi, in 1800, from its western boundary. Mississippi is said to denote Kie, white river, that is, the river formed by the union of many. Louisiana, so called in honour of Louis XVI. of France. Tennessee, in 1796, from its principal river; the word Tennessee is said to signify a curved spoon. Kentucky, in 1782, from its principal river. Illinois, in 1809, from its principal river. The word is said to signify the river of men. Indiana, in 1802, from the American Indians. Ohio, in 1802, from its southern boundary. Missouri, in 1821, from its principal river. Michigan, named in 1805, from the lake on its borders. Arkansas, in 1819, from its principal river. Florida was so called by Juan Ponce de Leon, in 1572, because it was discovered on Easter Sunday; in Spanish, *Pascua Florida*.—Simmonds's Colonial Magazine.

To CORRESPONDENTS.—Germanicus—B. B.—Tacito—K.—W. S. M.—J. L. F.—T. H. 3—received.

Erratum.—P. 434, col. 3, line 22, for "1172 guineas," read 11½ guineas.

DISEASED AND HEALTHY LIVES ASSURED. MEDICAL, INVALID, and GENERAL LIFE OFFICE, 25, Pall Mall, London.

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This Office is provided with very accurately constructed tables, by which it can assure unsound lives on equitable terms.

Similar tables enable the Society to grant increased annuities on diseased lives, and to ascertain the particular disease. Members of consumptive families assured are entitled to rates.

Healthy lives are assured on lower terms than at most other offices.

The first Life Assurance Society commenced business in 1705, and the principles of life contingencies, and the mortality to a very limited extent only, have subsequently undergone important changes and improvements; but till the establishment of this Society in 1841 no attempt had ever been made to assure the lives of persons who suffer from disease.

The science of statistics has only within a recent period been sufficiently advanced to determine the mortality of disease, and hence tables on the probability of these results could not have been formed; and it would evidently have been unsafe and hazardous for any Society to have undertaken the risk of assuring the lives of persons affected with any particular malady.

The study of disease, however, has recently advanced, and the section of this office, is of so great an extent as fully to warrant the extension of life assurance to such cases, and in fact to place the application of life assurance on diseased lives on a more secure basis than even that of healthy lives.

It is however to be regretted that in that this Society, in common with other offices, will assume the lives of healthy persons, it is as yet the only one established to assure the lives of persons labouring under disease; and to this latter feature particular attention is directed.

In the first place, because it opens a larger field for business than all other offices can have unitedly; and in the

Second place, because that branch of assurance must, from its own nature, be less hazardous, and its principles rest on a more permanent foundation.

These are two highly important facts, and we shall enter into an analysis of them, and first as to the prevalence of disease.

The period of life most important to an assurance office is that between 15—60 years of age, and in the following remarks we refer exclusively to this period of life.

The following table gives the deaths in the metropolis, for the two years preceding 1840, with the returns for 30,518, and from consumption alone, 10,688; showing that more than one-third of the total deaths in that period of life takes place from the prevalence of a single disease; and if same inquiry were instituted with respect to the existence of other diseases, such as asthma, dropsy, diphtheria, &c. &c. it would be found that the number of deaths from one of these diseases, is about one-half, and that one-half of the whole population would, on medical examination, be refused admission into an assurance office. If the inquiry be carried to the principal towns in England, like facts are obtained. In Birmingham, Liverpool, &c. the deaths from all causes per annum are about 5,000, while those from consumption are 1,988, forming considerably more than one-third of the whole. The same thing will be found to hold good in the large towns in Scotland, in six of which the deaths in a given period, from all causes, amounted to 33,078, those from consumption alone, 10,200, and the percentage of consumption 37.54; in the latter case forming more than 42 per cent. of the deaths from all causes. On reference to the returns from the city of Glasgow for 1836—40 it will be found that the deaths in that period, from all causes, were 14,107, from consumption 4,087, and the percentage 28.52, or five times 6,423, being more than 45 per cent. of the deaths from all causes.

The diseases here alluded to are such as exist in general in a chronic form, frequently for many years prior to death, but which, on a strict medical examination, would effectually exclude the individual from an assurance office, and since it thus appears that a majority of the population is included in this class, the value and importance of the new feature of this Society cannot fail to be justly appreciated.

The second point to be explained is the fact that there is much less risk in insuring diseased lives, than it is a feature of paramount and vital importance to the interests of this Society, and deserves to be carefully considered.

The real risk incurred in all insurance transactions consists in the chance to which an office is liable of experiencing a different rate of mortality from that which it has calculated upon, and since it thus appears that a majority of the population is included in this class, the value and importance of the new feature of this Society cannot fail to be justly appreciated.

The third point to be explained is this. It is a feature of paramount and vital importance to the interests of this Society, and deserves to be carefully considered.

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The remarkable uniformity in these results cannot fail to produce a conviction of the positive character of the law of mortality. Indeed, there seems to be no doubt that the mortality which ranges over the districts of Great Britain is so well defined as the mortality of diseased lives.

The mortality of the general population has frequently been referred to by writers as an example of the certainty of common events, but the preceding

remarks must show with how much greater certainty the mortality of diseased lives can be depended on.

It is perhaps right to state, that in applying the test of fluctuation to disease, it has not been confined to one place in England, and Scotland, as well as to many rural districts in England, and indeed to the example of one or two large societies of select lives.

The lives are afforded a comparison of just over 100 years, and the result is a remarkable fact has thus been developed, viz., that the value of life generally is much greater in the country districts than in large cities, and that those persons who suffer from disease have a value of life nearly the same as those who are healthy in cities (viz. Glasgow) 27.6 years—difference 33 per cent.; but take the case of persons of age in whom the duration of life is increased, the result is still more striking, viz., that in cities (viz. Exeter, Bristol, and Norfolk) will be found to be 14.5, in cities (viz. Chester, 14.4, and in the Metropolis, Manchester, Birmingham, 13.9; difference 31.7 per cent. (or 1.57 per cent.)

It therefore appears, that the difference between town and country life in the case of a person of 30 in the country districts is 30 years; but take the case of persons of 60, the result is still more striking, viz., that in cities (viz. Exeter, Bristol, and Norfolk) will be found to be 14.5, in cities (viz. Chester, 14.4, and in the Metropolis, Manchester, Birmingham, 13.9; difference 31.7 per cent. (or 1.57 per cent.)

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